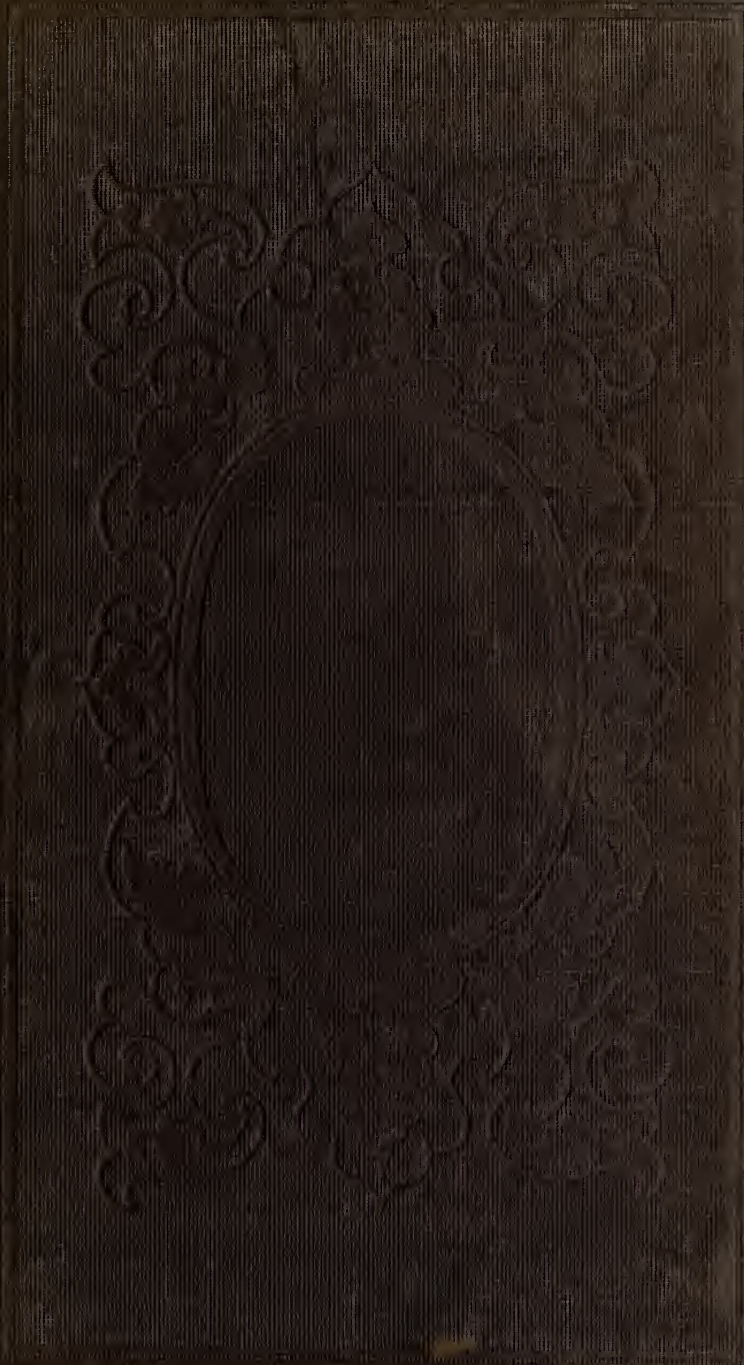

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MORMONISM IN ALL AGES:

OR THE

RISE, PROGRESS, AND CAUSES

OF

MORMONISM;

WITH THE

BIOGRAPHY OF ITS AUTHOR AND FOUNDER,

JOSEPH SMITH, JUNIOR.

Jonathan Baldwin

BY PROFESSOR J. B. TURNER, 1805-18

ILLINOIS COLLEGE, JACKSONVILLE, ILL.

"AND THAT PROPHET, OR THAT DREAMER OF DREAMS, SHALL BE PUT TO DEATH."—*Deut. xiii.* 5.

"WHEREFORE REBUKE THEM SHARPLY."—*Titus, i.* 13.

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INTRODUCTION.

The Mormons boast of one hundred thousand adherents in this country, and more than ten thousand in Great Britain, where their faith is making rapid progress. This may be an exaggeration; but, at all events, it is time the absurdities of their scheme were exposed. They are, in truth, the most dangerous and virulent enemies to our political and religious purity, and our social and civil peace, that now exist in the Union: not so much, however, on the ground of their *direct*, as of their *indirect* influence. The ravages in the front of their march are far less to be dreaded, than the moral pestilence which follows them. The bubbles of fanaticism, it is true, leap and sparkle around their prow, but the dull and sullen waves of atheism roll, and spread wide, in their wake behind. It has ever been true that they have made one hundred infidels to every dozen converts. This fact has not been properly heeded. There is much reason to believe that many of their popular leaders are at heart infidels. Those who can believe that skeptical and ambitious men, who could not be converted to Christianity, have been *really* made to *believe* in Joe Smith, may do so if they choose. The multitudes who fall into their ranks and retire, are, in general, reduced to absolute atheism. Some are recovered again: many are not, but sink into still deeper and stronger delusions.

In their public addresses, nothing is more common than to hear them defend the Book of Mormon, in promiscuous assemblies, by attacking and ridiculing the Bible, either directly or indirectly. Their object generally is to show that if the Book of Mormon is ridiculous, in whole or in part, the Bible is so too. By these and similar processes, they succeed in affecting the minds of the thoughtless multitude with the

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vague impression that the Book of Mormon is at least as truly of divine authority as the Bible. A few receive both, as divine; a far greater number make up their minds to have nothing to do with either.

Even the most pious and devout members of the professed church of the Mormons labor hard, at all times and in all places, to show that "if the gifts of miracle, healing, prophecy, &c., are not still in the true church, the Bible must be false." To the ignorant, everywhere, they make this appear plausible. They then show that no church pretends to these gifts except their own, while they themselves still fail, totally, to exhibit them to the public. Yet they claim to possess these gifts, and bring forward witnesses from among the initiated, who testify that they have seen them exercised. Thousands are convinced by this argument that the Bible is false, and perhaps tens that Mormonism is true. Hence we find the books of Smith in the houses and hands of infidels, who will neither read nor tolerate the Bible: and no class are so full of charity, sympathy, and compassion for the Mormons, as avowed unbelievers in the divine authority of the Scriptures, or downright Atheists. The secret is here: by tolerating the dreamy visions of Joe Smith, they are enabled with more ease to dispense with Jesus Christ and his doctrines.

Mormonism always fights with desperation; and, if it cannot save its own life, it resolves to stab all other faiths, good and bad. Here lies another of the secrets both of its triumphs and its havoc. It throws multitudes into this predicament. It urges them to feel and to say—"We must be either Mormons or Deists." Some dread the latter; many more shrink back from the former. It concentrates all its energies, to throw the minds of those who will listen to its appeals, at once, and at all hazards, into such a position. Can any one, of common sense, doubt the result, whether it were publicly apparent or not?

The author of this volume has *desired* to meet and repulse both of the above tendencies of the Mormon scheme. He has aimed to place the Bible and the Book of Mormon in their true relative positions; and to show that the distance which separates them is infinite; the one proceeding from the light of heaven, the other from the chaos and darkness of the pit. He has no personal ill-will towards any of the Mormons. As neighbors and fellow-citizens, he would desire, in all his social intercourse with them, to treat them with kindness and respect. But to treat their opinions, or their books, in a similar manner, is beyond the reach of his capacity. Nor does he believe that the public good either requires or admits it. "Soft answers may turn away wrath," but they cannot cure fanatics. The faith of the Mormons, and the practices by which it has been propagated, are of a class, which, "to be hated, needs but to be seen" in their true light. They require, therefore, to be exposed. Their Prophet complains that others have *called* him an impostor and a knave. It will be for himself and others to judge, whether this book does not *prove* him such. What course he and his friends may take in reference to it, is uncertain. They may pass it by in silent, affected contempt. They may call it all so many "dissenters' and Gentiles' lies." They may also hunt out all the errors, misprints, and misquotations, or inaccurate references, which doubtless will be found here, as well as in the inspired works of Smith, and array these, as a specimen of the whole argument, before their credulous readers. There is one thing, however, they will not do: they will not recommend the book as it is, to the perusal of their followers, as a means of strengthening their faith. Yet they may even *pretend* to do this, in order to falsify our prediction. As in the game of "outwitting the devil," which we shall have occasion to state, a few months reflection will doubtless enable Smith's divinity to hit upon the most prudent course, whether silence, or contempt, or review.

Like all other fanaticisms, Mormonism is adapted in its own nature to awaken either the indignation and contempt, or the sympathy and compassion of mankind. It is not the design of this book to excite the latter; but rather, by invoking the former, to exterminate, if possible, that silly credulity on which all similar delusions rest. The folly of Mormonism and the Mormons, and the turpitude of their leaders, are the principal themes of our pages. We leave to others the appropriate task of bewailing the miseries and ruin of this strange and extravagant enthusiasm.

The chapter on "*Fanaticisms*" may seem to some useless; to others harsh, misanthropic, and injurious. But there are particular reasons for presenting the subject of human credulity in its most gross and revolting aspects, aside from its direct bearing on Mormonism. Skeptical writers often insinuate, that if Christians only knew what they know of human credulity, it would destroy their belief in all forms of faith, Christianity not excepted. There is therefore an advantage in admitting, in the outset, even more than they claim on this point, and expressing it in terms equally severe; not only because it is true, but also because it prepares the way more effectually to demolish and annihilate their absurd inferences from that truth. The facts presented, both in this and the other chapters, are indeed far more numerous than it would be either needful or proper to quote in a strictly philosophical essay on these subjects. But if we would increase the *real power* of true religion, we must first weaken popular credulity. To accomplish this we must exhibit FACTS. Mere reasoning, with a bare allusion to the facts, can never produce the desired effect in the mass of minds. Again, we ought to take out of the hands of the skeptic the immense advantage which he gains, in first presenting such facts, and then wielding them as arguments against Christianity, by pretending that Christians are either ignorant of them, or afraid to allude to them. "We, the philosophers," say they, "will give you facts, equally as wonderful as any pretended miracles, which the priests strive to keep you ignorant of."

The skeptic should not have this advantage. Better to give him his rope, and then strangle him with the knots which he ties with his own hands.

Chapter fourth presents only an outline, and by no means a full view, of the proper evidences of Christianity. In giving up human testimony entirely, as a proper basis of religious faith, it may strike some minds that we must also give up Christianity. It is hoped that this chapter will lead them to such reflections as will show that they are mistaken—that they have really no ground for any such fear.

The chapters on the history, books, and faith of the Mormons may seem still more objectionable to many—on the ground that the subjects are often treated with too much harshness and levity. The reader is requested to consider, in the first place, that it is difficult to make that which is in its own nature *ridiculous*, appear *respectable*, when truly presented; and that it is indeed hard to reason down, by mere argument, what has in no manner been reasoned up. To those who can appreciate sound reason these chapters are unnecessary. But to the multitudes who are endangered by Mormonism mere reason can do no good. Throwing aside all other considerations, the author, in these chapters, has endeavored so to present the subject, that its inherent grossness and absurdity may be *felt*, even by those whose reason cannot perceive the truth. He would not simply arm them with arguments, but with what, in many cases, is more powerful than arguments—*with contempt*. A Mormon, it is believed, will find it difficult either to reason with, or to proselyte any man who has read this book, however unlearned he may be. This opinion is based not on conjecture, but on actual experiment.

By most, probably, the seeming spirit of the book will be deemed its greatest fault. It is hoped, however, that what may seem useless and even offensive to some, may prove useful to others. The subject is peculiar: the classes of minds to be influenced are equally peculiar: and if the author has wholly missed his aim, he hopes some one more able, and more successful, will soon supply the deficiency. There is need of it. Yet all must be aware that to write a book on such a subject is indeed a thankless task.

The present volume is the work of a few weeks' leisure. Neither other duties, nor the merits of the subject, would allow of expending either time or thought on mere style, as such. It is not probable that any able critic will trouble himself to read, much less to review, what is here written. If he should, he will probably find, so far as style is concerned, much to condemn, and little to approve. The ordinary reader, it is hoped, will pardon the book as it is; and, if his taste is sometimes offended, apply himself more exclusively to the thought: if that is generally *understood*, it is all the author has found time to attempt, and more, probably, than he has performed. If the book in any degree tends to strengthen rational faith, and annihilate its antagonist *credulity*, it will be all that can be hoped from it. Proximity to the evil, disgust with its authors, abhorrence of their impudent perfidy, their political intrigues, and pretended sanctity, together with the constant fear of an impending civil war, may induce those near at hand, both to think, feel, and speak with greater severity, than others, more remote, may judge either wise or expedient.

It is by no means intended, however, that the great body of the Mormons are obnoxious to these charges. They are, in general, an ignorant, simple, honest, industrious, deluded people. But their leaders are NOT deluded. They know perfectly well the full scope of their own perfidious aims; which, absurd as they may seem to some, are neither more nor less than a religious monarchy in these free states, of which they themselves are to be the centres and the demigods.

Mormonism, if suffered to spread extensively, and unite with Atheism and Romanism, its natural allies, will soon have power to disturb, not single states only, but the entire Union.

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MORMONISM IN ALL AGES.

CHAPTER I.

ORIGIN AND HISTORY OF MORMONISM.

Mormon Works—Smith's conversion—Vision—Obtains the plates—Employs Harris—Mode of translation—His books—New Bible—First Mormon church—Union with Rigdon, in Ohio—Rigdon's doctrines and spasms—His conversion and baptism—Removal of the church to Ohio—Kirtland miracles—REFLECTIONS on the real origin of the Mormon doctrines, and the causes of their original success.

THOUGH the Mormons profess that all their members are personally inspired, and directed of the Lord in all they do, in proportion to their individual faith, still they have but two books which claim to be pre-eminently Divine Revelations, viz., the BOOK OF MORMON and the BOOK OF DOCTRINES AND COVENANTS, both the offspring of J. Smith.

Besides these, they have several other books of great authority and influence in the church, as *Pratt's Voice of Warning*, reserved volumes and numbers of their past and present periodicals, from the early history of their church to the present day—e. g., *Morning and Evening Star; Messenger and Advocate; Elders' Journal*, together with numerous pamphlets, published occasionally, in defence of their church, by their leading elders and functionaries.

The Book of Mormon was first published by J. Smith, 1830, at Palmyra, N. York, and professes to be the foundation of their whole scheme ; in short, a new revelation from God, containing "*the* fulness of the gospel of Jesus Christ," by which God shall "work a great and marvellous work," "bringing to nought the wisdom of the wise," "gather the children of Israel," and "convince Jew and Gentile that Jesus is the Christ."*

Smith's account of the manner in which he discovered the golden plates, from which he translated the Book of Mormon, is as follows.

In the year 1823, when our prophet was about seventeen years of age, his mind became, for the first time, deeply excited on the subject of religion, by Mr. Lane, a devoted and talented elder of the Methodist church, under whose preaching there was "a great awakening," and numbers, among whom were our prophet and several members of his family, were "professedly added to the kingdom of the Lord." After the revival ceased, the usual strife for proselytes between the several sects commenced ; this resulted, so far as the Smiths were concerned, in bringing the mother, one sister, and two brothers into the Presbyterian church ; but leaving Joseph, as he states, in disgust with all the sects, and almost in despair of ever coming to the knowledge of the truth, amid so many contradictory and conflicting claims. He resorted to prayer for "a full manifestation of Divine approbation," and "for the assurance that he was accepted of him." This occurred some time in the winter of 1823.

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* See titlepage ; also the words of the angel to J. Smith. Messenger and Advocate, Vol. I. p. 198.

On the memorable evening of the 21st of September following, after the rest of the family had retired, while engaged in meditation, watching, and prayer to God, suddenly his room was filled with light, "far more pure and glorious than the light of day," and above the brightness of the sun, when lo! a form stood before him, whose face was as lightning, and whose person beamed forth still more refulgent and unutterable splendor. This personage was of somewhat more than ordinary size, his garments were pure white, and apparently without seam. This angel (as he proved to be) proceeded to inform Smith that his sins were forgiven, and that the Lord had chosen him to bring forth and translate the *Book of Mormon*, which one *Moroni*, the last of the Nephites, of the seed of Israel, had abridged from the records of his tribe, and engraved on plates of gold, and deposited in a stone box upon the hill Camorah, in Manchester, N. Y., about three miles from his father's house, where said records had already laid deposited about 1400 years.* Notwithstanding all these marvels were twice repeated before morning, and definite instructions given, still Smith says that the next day he went to his "labor as usual." (?) Soon the messenger re-appeared, and warned him to go immediately to the spot described, in search of the plates.†

He went, and found them deposited in a box of stone, near the surface of the earth, nicely secured both from air and moisture, by means of a peculiar cement applied to the joints of the box. The plates were thin leaves of gold, six or eight inches square, and held together at one edge by metallic rings passing through each leaf.

On removing the slight deposit of earth, and the stone from the top, he attempted to take possession of the records or plates; but he received a shock which not only frustrated his attempt, but also deprived him of his natural strength. This was repeated three times, until finally he involuntarily exclaimed aloud, "Why cannot I obtain this book?" Suddenly the angel of the Lord appears, and informs him, that it was because he had on his way to the hill indulged in mercenary thoughts and desires in regard to enriching himself and his family by the possession of the plates, and the sale of the wonderful book he was about to translate therefrom.

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* See B. of M., p. 529.

† See Mess. and Adv. p. 156.

He resorted to prayer; and again "the heavens were opened, and the glory of the Lord shone around him." Satan and his hosts passed before him, and the angel proceeded to instruct him still further, declaring that he must desire to obtain and translate the plates solely for the glory of God, and the good of his fellow man, without any selfish or pecuniary desires, either in relation to himself or his family, else his gift and power would be taken from him.

However, he was not permitted to take the plates at this time; but after listening to a long discourse from the angel, he withdrew, and engaged in the service of a man by the name of Stowell, who resided in the town of Bainbridge, Chenango Co., N. York. Stowell employed him, as Smith says, "to dig for a cave of silver, secreted by the Spaniards" near Harmony, Penn., where he first became acquainted with Miss Emma Hale, daughter of Isaac Hale, Esq., of that place. He spent some months, with several others, in search of this treasure, as he states, in the employ of Stowell.*

* See Adv. Vol. I. p. 100

Four years after this memorable 22d of September, 1823, i. e. on the 22d of September, 1827, the angel of the Lord delivered the records or plates of the Nephites to Joseph Smith, and with them the mystic "Urim and Thummim," or two stones set in a bow, found in the same box with the plates; by looking through these, he was to be enabled to translate the record from the reformed Egyptian, in which unknown tongue they were first written, into what HE CALLS the English language.

As regards his history and employment during these four years, we must look to other sources for information, which we shall do hereafter. The reader will, in the mean time, bear in mind this story of Smith himself. Neither are we told who covered and secured the box again, although we are advised that these four years of the prophet's life did not roll away without their appropriate marvels; all which matters, together with the events of the foregoing history, were related and varied to suit the exigencies of the case, until the year 1834, when the history was first interlarded with prophetic declarations of the angel, which had already been fulfilled, the whole story new vamped, stereotyped, and given to the world for the edification of the saints, in the columns of the Messenger and Advocate, under the supervision of Smith, and by the hand of Oliver Cowdery, in substance as above narrated.

Martin Harris, the first dupe and coadjutor of Smith, at the time of these transactions, (in the fall of 1827,) gave a very different account of the whole matter, on the authority of Smith, to the editor of the Episcopal Recorder, to which I shall refer the reader, instead of repeating the story here. Of the character of Harris I shall speak hereafter. However, Smith persuaded Harris to engage with him in translating and publishing the book, which ultimately cost Harris a farm, worth, as it is said, $10,000.

At this time, Smith himself was both poor and unable to write for the press; Harris therefore loaned him his estate for expenditures, and his hand as a scribe.

According to one account given by Mr. Harris, Joseph suspended a thick blanket across the room, on one side of which he sat and looked through his Urim and Thummim, or stone spectacles, and the Lord caused the correct translation of the mystic record to pass before his eyes, word for word, which he (Joseph) uttered aloud, a word at a time, while Harris sat on the other side of the blanket, and wrote down all as he heard it from Smith.

Of course the divine wrath was denounced against all who should attempt to gain a view of the plates, except Smith. This kept Martin in his place, though not without some trouble, as sundry revelations* show in the Book of Covenants; until he finally gave place to Oliver Cowdery, as scribe, by whose aid the book was completed and published in 1830, three years after the pretended reception of the plates; thus giving from 1823, when the plates were discovered, to 1827, when they were obtained, four years, for general scheming, and three years for translation, from '27 to '30.

Various other stories have been circulated as regards the manner of translation; e. g., it is said by the Mormons that Smith put his stones into his hat, and placed his face close to them, and thus saw the words through the stones; in reference to which only one thing is important to be noted, to wit: they all agree in making the Lord responsible not only for the thought, but also for the language of the book, from the necessity of the case, for they all claim that the words passed before Smith's eyes while looking through the pellucid stones.

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* See Book of Cov. §32.

The reader will please bear this in mind while reading the chapter on internal evidence.

The Book of Mormon is a duodecimo volume of 588 pages, consisting of fifteen different books, purporting to be written at different times by the authors whose names they bear. These historical books profess to cover a period of about 1000 years, from the time of Zedekiah, king of Judea, to A. D. 420.

It is not my purpose to give even an outline of this bundle of gibberish, further than to remark, that it professes to trace the history of the aborigines of this continent, in their apostasies, pilgrimages, trials, adventures, and wars, from the time of their leaving Jerusalem, in the reign of Zedekiah, under one Lehi, down to their final disaster, near the hill Camorah, N. Y., where Smith found his bible; in which final contest, according to the prophet Moroni, about 230,000 were slain in a single battle, and he alone escaped to tell the tale. All which we learn, through Joseph Smith, by means of the plates and stones already mentioned. Did not this book claim divine authority, it would perhaps be about as harmless as the same amount of nonsense could well be, and might be read with no direct evil, excepting loss of time.

The Book of Covenants and Revelations, as it is called, contains about 250 pages, 18mo.

The first seventy-five pages contain a series of seven lectures on faith, with questions and answers appended to each, touching peculiar doctrines of the church.

Part second is mainly occupied with professed revelations given at sundry times, by God, to J. Smith, respecting the translation of the Book of Mormon, the organization, doctrines, and government of the church; management of its finances, sending forth preachers, building temples and dwellings for Smith,* removing to the West, founding Mt. Zion in Missouri, and purchasing lands there, for an *everlasting possession*, (?) transferring town-lots, tavern-houses, joint stock, tan-yards, chewing tobacco, doctoring cows, feeding horses, hogs, and hens; in short, *revelations* touching all those *spiritual* matters, in which Joe Smith's divinity, in this latter-day glory of the church, appears to have felt a *deep* and *peculiar* interest. This is truly the BLACK BOOK of Mormonism.

The whole design of it, from beginning to end, is, to concentrate power and resources around Joe Smith and his compeers, and to swindle the poor fools who believe it divinely inspired, at once out of their money and their wits. It has really exerted a thousand fold more influence, on the doctrines and destinies of the Mormon church, than all other books put together; still it is usually kept in the background, and the Book of Mormon thrown forward, as their main authority, next after the Bible. True, its main design is tolerably concealed, though sufficiently apparent to any man who will compare the several revelations with the actual condition and history of the church at the time they were given. But more of this hereafter.

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* B. C. p. 189.

Parley P. Pratt's "Voice of Warning" does not profess *peculiar* inspiration, but is considered by the Mormons as the most able exposition and defence of their peculiar doctrines, especially those which they derive from the prophecies and those which pertain to the "kingdom of God," or, the organization of the church.

Smith has another work of considerable importance and interest in manuscript, parts of which only have as yet been given to the world. This is a new edition of the Holy Scriptures, "Translated through the power and gift of God," "by Joseph Smith, jr., the Prophet of the Lord." But how translated? Does Smith understand either Hebrew or Greek? Not at all: but he can read or translate any thing, through his famous stones, even the gibberish, which the Mormons mumble over, when they are endowed with the marvellous "gift of tongues," of which so much "hath been spoken."

The truth is, Smith at first knew so little of what was in the Bible, which he professed to believe, that he had not proceeded far, before a new translation of that was indispensable, to save both him and his cause from utter disgrace and ruin.

Accordingly in this new edition, whole verses and almost entire chapters are added to the original text as occasion requires. In proof of which, compare the 34th of Exodus and the 24th of Matthew with this new translation. But as these examples may not be accessible to some, I will refer to those extracts quoted from the "new translation" in the Book of Covenants, p. 13, et seq.; in which few verses, taken from the first chapters of Genesis, the doctrines of the trinity, viz., Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, also of the atonement of sacrifices, and their import, are fully set forth by the angel of the Lord to Adam.

Is this from the Hebrew text, or from Smith's stone spectacles? Still these are far from being the worst examples of this new translation; they are only referred to as being most universally at hand. I fear Joseph will have to make several translations more, before he will succeed in making the Bible, in whole or in part, accord either with the Mormon bible, or the Book of Covenants, or with the Mormon hierarchy and church government.

It is wise to keep this new translation in manuscript, for the special use of the "saints." The profane eyes of the Gentiles might see more in it than is written, even though much more is written than ever was found in the original text. People who have not faith never exercise a sound and devout discretion in such matters. "But the Lord knoweth them that are his." So says Joseph Smith; and it is kind to reserve now and then a sweet morsel for their special benefit, especially as he is the authorized prophet of God, "to ALL NATIONS, kindreds, people, and tongues."

The remaining periodicals and pamphlets of this sect need no further notice here.

Immediately after the translation of the Book of Mormon, i. e. on the 6th of April, 1830, the first Mormon church was organized in Manchester, N. Y., with only six members, viz., Joseph Smith, sen., Hyrum Smith, Samuel Smith, the father and brothers of the prophet, Oliver Cowdery, scribe to Smith, Joseph Knight, and the prophet. Of these, of course, Joseph Smith, jun., the prophet, was "called and ordained an apostle of Jesus Christ," and *first* elder of the new church, which afterwards assumed the title of the "Church of Latter Day Saints." Oliver Cowdery, the scribe, was, with like propriety, appointed *second* elder.*

Soon after, a branch was established at Fayette, and the June following, another in Colesville, N. Y., not far from Bainbridge, where Joseph was employed in 1823, by Stowell, to dig for money as we have seen.

Twenty were added to the churches in Manchester and Fayette in the month of April, and on the 28th of June following, thirteen were added in Colesville.

In October, 1830, the number had increased to between seventy and eighty, when four of the elders, P. P. Pratt, O. Cowdery, Peter Whitmer, and Tiba Peterson, started for the west, on a mission to the Indians; and in passing, founded a branch of the church in Kirtland, in the northeast part of Ohio. Here they baptized 130 disciples in less than four weeks, and before the next spring, the number was increased to about 1000.

As this passage in their history is somewhat marvellous in the eyes of others, as well as in the estimation of the Mormons themselves, who declare "that the Holy Spirit was mightily poured out," and "that the word of God grew and multiplied, and many priests were obedient to the faith," I shall pause a moment to elucidate it.

It is evident that here Mormonism first received a decided and resistless impulse. In N. York, where Smith was well known, it crept in the dirt, and still does to this day; but here it rose at once, and soared as on the wings of the wind. What then is the cause of this phenomenon? Many in the east have supposed that the backwoodsmen of the west are of course either infidels or natural fools, in all matters of faith, and therefore ready to believe this or any other novel absurdity. I admit that we are all, naturally, sufficiently credulous. Nor do we claim any more than our due share of folly in this respect. But I think a more particular and satisfactory solution of this question is at hand.

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* B. of C. p. 77, and Mess. and Adv., Vol. I,. p. 204.

The fact is, Mormonism, either by accident or intrigue, here met for the first time and concurred in a new system of doctrines prepared to its hand, and thus gained over to itself their original founders, P. P. Pratt and Sidney Rigdon, and secured not only their talent and zeal in its behalf, but also that of all, or at least, a great part of their followers. This happy concurrence of circumstances, united with the wily policy and stirring eloquence of Pratt and Rigdon, stirred up a popular fanatical sympathy, and set the ball to rolling with resistless force. But to be more particular:

About the year 1827, A. Campbell, W. Scott, and Sidney Rigdon, with some others residing in Virginia and Ohio, came off from the Baptist church, and established a new order under the name of Reformed Baptists.

Among these reformers, Mr. Rigdon, it appears, held to the literal interpretation of the prophecies, as the saints now do, and taught that the long lost tribes of Israel were soon to be restored, and that marvellous revolutions were at hand, not only affecting the moral, but also the political, and even the animal world.

These doctrines he not only taught and enforced with all that versatility and power of popular eloquence, with which he is said to be peculiarly gifted, but he also brought to his aid the eccentric and grotesque workings of a nervous and enthusiastic temperament, which at times threw him into spasms and swoonings, similar to those nervous agitations which have so often prevailed, not only in individual instances, but raged as epidemics both in and out of the churches. These nervous fits he interpreted into the agency of the Holy Spirit, as multitudes had done before him, and contended that the miraculous spiritual gifts of the apostolic age were now about to be restored to the church.

Here we meet for the first time with the Mormon doctrine of prophecies and miracles, in a region where Smith and his bible were never heard of, and long before either of these doctrines had appeared, distinctly, in any of the books, or, probably, in the thoughts of Smith.

The credulous and simple of course believed all he taught, especially when he confirmed his doctrine by nervous spasms and swooning, and their attendant rhapsodies and marvellous visions. Many hundreds were thus deluded and gathered into a church under his preaching, in Lake county, Ohio. Other preachers soon united their efforts with his, among whom was the famous Parley P. Pratt, the present mouthpiece of the saints. After his conversion to the doctrines of Rigdon, while on a journey, as he says, to visit his native place, Columbia county, N. Y., in August of 1830, he fell in with the Book of Mormon, which had then been published about six months, and gathered about fifty disciples in N. Y. "He was greatly prejudiced against it at first, but after praying to God he became convinced of its truth," as he says, "by the power of the Holy Ghost."

But whether he had a jerk, or a twitch, or a swoon, he has not informed us. On his return to Ohio, he presented the book to his valiant compeer in the faith, Sidney Rigdon. With much persuasion and argument he was prevailed upon to read it, and after a great struggle in his mind, he of course fully believed and embraced it.

Probably he was convinced in like manner, by a similar spirit and power; for it is indeed difficult to see how any man, especially of a nervous temperament, could read Smith's book through without being thrown into some sort of hysterics. The marvel is, that it should ever have happened otherwise.

Cowdery, in the mean time, had converted about seventeen of his society. Rigdon immediately assembled his old followers; a great congregation was gathered, and while he harangued them for nearly two hours, both himself and most of his congregation melted into tears. The next morning himself and wife were baptized, when again there was another outpouring of hysterics and tears; and during the fall of 1830, and the following winter and spring, many of his old disciples, and some others, in all about 1000, were baptized into the Mormon faith. In the glowing language of Pratt, "the Holy Spirit was mightily poured out, the word of God grew and multiplied, and many priests were obedient to the word." In about three weeks after he was converted, Rigdon visited Smith, in N. York, and since that time has continued *apparently* at his feet, drawing his inspiration from the fountain head. Here he not only received a confirmation of his faith, but also a command from the Lord,* through Smith, well suited both to his vanity and his aims. It is also reported that Rigdon, after joining the church, and spending a little time in Kirtland, was afraid he had been deceived, and visited Smith to have his doubts removed. He says that on arriving in N. Y., he went first to the enemies, and then to the friends of the church, and heard both stories, and the result was, that he was so fully convinced of the "truth," that he afterward told A. Campbell, "that if Smith should be proved a liar, or say himself that he never found the Book of Mormon, as he reported, he should still *believe*, and also believe that all who rejected it would be damned." Such remarkable piety rendered it highly expedient that the Lord should appoint him, forthwith, by an express revelation, the orator and oracle of *the faith.** This, however, is no unusual instance of faith among the Mormons. I have heard many of them express the same idea. Surely such faith should work wonders, and who can doubt that it does?

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* B. C. 117.

On the return of Rigdon in January, 1831, not only Smith, but also the whole church, removed, by divine commandment, from N. York to Kirtland, Ohio.†

During the fall and winter of '30 and '31, Kirtland was continually crowded with visiters, who came from all quarters to inquire after the "New Religion." About this time, as we are informed by credible historians and eye-witnesses, "many in the church became very visionary and had divers operations of the Spirit." They saw wonderful lights in the air and on the ground, and had many miraculous visions and experiences. Their conduct grew more and more eccentric and absurd. Sometimes they imitated the grotesque antics of the wild Indian, in knocking down, scalping, and tearing out the bowels of his victim, thus anticipating the hour of their fancied mission to those lost sons of Jacob.

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* See B. C. 117, 5, 6. † B. C. 119. 7.

Again, they ran into the fields, mounted upon stumps, and, while absorbed in vision, and insensible to all around them, they plunged into the waters of baptism, or harangued the imaginary multitudes by whom they thought they were surrounded. Some professed to receive letters direct from heaven, written on *stones* or parchment, in characters which they alone had power to translate, and which vanished as soon as the work was performed. Others fell into a trance, and continued apparently lifeless for a long time, and woke only to relate the wonders they had seen touching the future glory of the saints, and the destruction of the unbelieving. Sometimes their faces, bodies, and limbs were violently distorted and convulsed, until they fell prostrate on the ground. Indeed, it is reported by an eye-witness, that at first the laying hands on the heads of their converts to confer the gift of the Holy Spirit, generally produced an instantaneous prostration of both body and mind, often followed by a wonderful gift of tongues, as was supposed, in Indian dialects; which, indeed, none could understand except by direct inspiration. Some, in imitation of the prophet, received magic stones, through which they professed to see and describe not only the persons, but the dress and employments of persons hundreds of miles distant.

On page 182, B. C., there is an allusion to one of these marvellous stones given to Hiram Page, and translated by him. A new revelation respecting these wonders, and the spirits which produced them, may be found on page 134, B. C. It seems that Smith's paternal affection for the stone mania led him to treat that with some deference while he condemned all else as the work of the devil, though a most prolific source not only of wonder and faith to the saints, but of conversions.

All these eccentricities were undoubtedly in part hypocrisy, and in part the natural result of a contagious sympathy, emanating from Smith and Rigdon, and diffusing itself, on well-known epidemic principles, to be noticed more fully hereafter. The more substantial part of the church, however, soon became disgusted and appealed to Smith. After due prayer and deliberation he very wisely had a new revelation, informing them, in substance, that it was all the work of the devil, as mentioned above. It may be well to notice that the stone fever originated in Smith, while Rigdon seems to have been the original proprietor of the trance-vision, and spouting fever. After this new turn in their affairs, Smith and Rigdon appear to have taken to themselves the entire monopoly of wonders of all sorts, and to have commended the saints to the more quiet and appropriate duty of believing. This philosophical division of labor has doubtless conduced much to the quiet of general society, and the edification and docility of the saints. In the winter of 1831, the opinion that they should never taste death, was propagated among them, and all diseases were to yield, not to the profane aid of medicine, but to the faith, prayers, herbs, and poultices of the devout.*

The prophet himself, however, in the case of his "elect lady," had recourse to a surgeon, greatly to the grief and scandal of the church. Others of less note were piously left to die in the hands of their elders and root doctors.

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* B. C. 123, 12.

REFLECTIONS.

From the preceding narrative, which is taken from their own published writings, so far as the leading facts are concerned,* the following inferences are at once apparent and inevitable.

1. Rigdon and Pratt had been busy, either by accident or intrigue, in preparing for the triumph of Mormonism, in Ohio, for three years before the people in that region ever heard of Smith or his book; that is, from the year 1827, the very same year in which Smith pretends he commenced the translation of the plates, up to the year 1830, when Rigdon and Pratt were professedly converted.

2. Rigdon, and not Smith, was the originator of their doctrines concerning the literal fulfilment of the prophecies, the restoration of the Jews, the literal reign of the saints in Zion, and the restoration of the miraculous gifts of the apostolic age to the modern church; and that, too, according to their own showing.† Yet these doctrines lie at the foundation of the Mormon church, as all know. Take these away, and there is nothing left in their whole system of sufficient power to engross the intellect of an ape.

3. Before the union of these two forces, Mormonism

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* See Parley P. Pratt's Truth Vindicated, p. 40; Evening and Morning Star, Vol. I., p. 167 and 90; Corill's History of the Latter Day Saints, p. 16, et seq.

† See Pratt, as above, p. 40.

had neither form nor vigor, spirit nor power: it was a mere turbid ripple, eddying around the Smiths and Whitmers, and their money-digging comrades, without depth or motion, excepting in a very limited circle. It could scarce control the faith, much less excite the emotions of granny Smith herself. It had neither end nor aim, neither object nor force, beyond the already habitual and ordinary aspirations of Joseph, the money-digger. And, indeed, *he* did not know what to do with it himself, as we shall hereafter see. Before the accession of Rigdon, in 1830, not one of the peculiar and properly fundamental doctrines of Mormonism are to be found in the Book of Mormon; nor were they ever taught, so far as appears, by Smith, unless in loose generalities, which were susceptible of interpretations to suit circumstances.*

4. But after the conversion of Rigdon, things soon begin to wear a different aspect. Smith's divinity, in his revelations, appears more explicit, decisive, and imperative. He drops his vague generalities, and occasionally utters a word that is clear, definite, and to the point. He proceeds to organize his church, and propound its doctrines, government, and duties, as though he, at least, had some indistinct ideas of what he meant himself; until finally, after much ado, and great anguish of logomachy, he finally succeeds in making the Mormons understand, that they are to receive at the hands of Smith, as immediate revelations, the same doctrines that, in substance, Rigdon had taught them, while he was, as he admits, an outcast from God and the true church, during the three or four preceding years, and

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* See revelation on the rise of the church, Fayette, N. Y., June, 1830. B. of C., §2. p. 77.

that they were to organize the church with two distinct priesthoods, the Melchisedec and the Aaronic, both embracing a sufficient number of presidents, bishops, prophets, priests, elders, &c., to make every Mormon a man of authority, taking due care ever to keep Smith and Rigdon on the top of the heap, "according to the ancient gospel." Let not the profane think strange of this; the ways of Providence are often mysterious, and if there is ever any thing inexplicable here, Joseph Smith, jun. is fully empowered to receive special revelations, explanatory, whenever or wherever either the edification or the uneasiness of the saints may require them.

5. Rigdon had been long accustomed to play upon the religious credulity of the people, and to arouse and concentrate the religious emotions of his fellow-men. He could preach, exhort, philosophize, rave, read, sing, pray, and cry whenever and wherever occasion required. And after the first "general heat," at each and all of these at once, which occurred at the time of his conversion, confession, and baptism, Mormonism caught, as we have seen, not only his followers and doctrines, but also his spirit, his eloquence, and even his faintings, his swoonings, visions, and ecstasies, and thus became "a thing of life," and rose at once from wallowing in the gutter with Smith, to soar in the sky with its new compeer. Some have thought that Rigdon was from the first the secret originator of the whole scheme. But of this, to say the least, there is no proof. On the contrary, there is a strong probability that he has been to Mormonism what Peter the Hermit was to the crusades; not the originator of the fanatical materials, but the explosive power from which they derived all their

terror, their brilliancy, and their force. Still, what precise part in the comedy of Mormonism posterity may ultimately assign him is doubtful. Whether he is to be considered as the speaker of the prologue, or the hero, or the fool of the play, is yet doubtful. It is nevertheless true, and susceptible of moral demonstration, that if Sidney Rigdon had not lived, Joe Smith and his book must have perished in the same timely grave; or rather, in all probability, Joe would have lived to bear the pall of his own book, unaided, unhonored, and alone.

It has often been asked, whether it is credible that a man of Rigdon's information should really believe the Book of Mormon a divine revelation? Those who are credulous enough to believe him sincere may do so if they please; but it is credible that a man of his perverted and ambitious temper, after having run through all creeds, dabbled in politics, turned skeptic, and then again enthusiast,—it is quite credible that such a man should be converted, with tears in his eyes, to Joe Smith's creed, or any other, from which he could hope to raise the wind, and stand at the helm again, for a season. His well-known character and history render his sudden and whining conversion to Smith neither a mystery nor a miracle. Should Smith's divinity dare to assign him some more humble station among "the Latter Day Saints," probably the world would see him converted again, either to his former skepticism or to some newfangled fanaticism. At present, Smith has evident need of him at Nauvoo, at least until some of their new charters have done their best.

CHAPTER II.

HISTORY OF MORMONISM, CONTINUED.

Endowment and journey to Missouri—Multitude of elders and proselytes—Character of proselytes—Gift of tongues—Big firm, banks, temple, study of Hebrew, &c.—Mormon pentecost—Removal to Mt. Zion, Mo.—Mob at Jackson co.—Consequent revelation to Smith—Army of Zion—Retreats—Disturbance in Caldwell—Salt Sermon—The Danites—Poisoning the wells—The Destructionists—Rigdon's famous Fourth of July oration—The prophet's harangue at the head of his troops—Expulsion of the Mormons from Missouri—Tragedy at How's Mills—Mob law—Arrival of the Mormons at Quincy—Number and progress of the Mormons—Charters—Result of persecution—Authorities, proclamations, recent revelations, and present designs of Smith—New temple—Baptism for the dead—Polls—Dangers of civil war.

In June, 1831, the elders of the Mormon church, now about fifty in number, were commanded by revelation, through Smith, to assemble at Kirtland to receive the "endowment." The meeting was conducted by Smith. They had assembled expecting mighty exhibitions of something, they knew not what, and of course mighty results followed. The spirit of fanaticism appeared anew among the elders, in spite of counter revelations. "It threw one from his seat upon the floor;" it paralyzed another so that he could neither move nor speak. Other marvels occurred, until by a "mighty exertion in the name of the Lord," it was shown to be from an evil source; and the evil spirits were then duly exorcised, and all was quiet. At last it was discovered that the great endowment consisted simply in ordaining a few more priests. The elders were somewhat disappointed and chagrined at the result; and finding it difficult to allay their excited feelings, and to dispel their doubts, Smith, as usual, when there were indications of trouble in the camp, despatched the whole posse, by divine command, from head-quarters to Missouri, commanding them to go two and two, by different routes, and preach as they went.

Smith, Rigdon, and six or eight others, followed them to Jackson county, Missouri, where Smith pointed out the spot for the temple, received divers revelations, held conferences, &c., and then returned. They here found that the great *church*, which Smith saw in vision in Butler county, before they started, consisted of *four females*. This jaunt to Missouri seems to have removed the elders' doubts, without abating their enthusiasm. The church continued meantime to gather at Kirtland, and nearly all their male converts, however ignorant or worthless, were transformed into elders.

Their emissaries were roaming, two and two, through all parts of the land. The number of these travelling priests and elders at this time is not known; but in the "Messenger and Advocate," p. 335, the names of those whose licenses were recorded during the preceding quarter only, amount to 250; from this it may be easily inferred that Mormonism, in its early history, was more prolific in priests and elders than ever Egypt was in frogs, and if they could not out-reason, any one of them could out-talk any thing or anybody they might chance to meet. They soon had the scriptures, or at least so much of them as they were directed to use, at their tongue's end, and were ever ready to deluge those whom they met with a shower of proof texts. Of course they gained many proselytes; multitudes flocked to hear them, and both the wise and the unwise were alike confounded, though for far different reasons. Those who had been excommunicated, or censured, or despised, or endangered, in other churches, at once saw new light. The gospel of the Mormons appeared peculiarly adapted to their necessities as sinners; and a tramp to Kirtland, or on a mission, relieved them, at once, both of their sins and their infamy.

Others were appropriately convinced that the Lord had chosen the weak things of the world to confound the mighty, and consequently took up their line of march for the prophet. Not a few admired the genuine and unaffected humility of a church which was ready to receive those as prophets and apostles who could not even spell the name of the divine office to which they aspired; especially, when they contrasted it with the arrogance and intolerance of those sects they were about to leave, many of whom, in the pride and folly of their hearts, would not submit to be taught things divine by those who could not read intelligibly the decalogue of Moses or the sermon on the mount.

These drew along in their train a motley host of all shapes and sizes, some from one motive, and some from another; men gaping for marvels, and women ready to swoon; some praying for an apostle's martyrdom, others for Smith's millennium; some thinking of their sins, and others of Ohio bank-stock and Missouri lands; some thinking the world was soon to be overturned, others hoping to overturn it; but all expecting prodigies of some sort, and to witness, if not to obtain, the gift of tongues, of prophecy, of healing, &c.; in short, a multitude which everywhere abounds, who have been kindly gifted with all sorts of sense, except common sense, and who possess a genuine power of faith, which enables them to believe any thing whatsoever, for no other reason, it would seem, save that it is absurd, and who have obtained those marvellous gifts of a spirit which infallibly teaches them all knowledge, except the very simple and obvious fact, that they never knew any thing; these all were sucked, with wonderful facility, into this new Maelstroom of faith, and drawn with becoming velocity toward the conjuring spirits at the centre in Kirtland, Ohio. Nor is it to be denied, that amid this general tumult of social and fanatical impulses, it sometimes happened, that men worthy of a better fate were swept into the vortex, with their comrades, and whirled along, until they either became giddy by the general confusion of objects around them, or slackened their speed, in order to retreat and warn their friends, or to contemplate with deliberate knavery the probable advantages of their new position, and to rush on again with redoubled velocity to attain the objects of their cupidity.

At first, the uncertainty of their position made even their leaders apparently humble, and the native credulity of their followers rendered them indeed sufficiently abject. Their souls having been already crushed and overpowered with absurdities in the outset of their career, the insults, taunts, and sneers which are ever, too profusely, perhaps, heaped upon those who have prostituted their humanity by sacrificing both their reason and common sense to their faith, soon engendered a sort of stoical apathy, and by habitual trial ripened their natural patience into insensibility to every thing except the absurdities of their creed. These and similar causes produced at once a servility of spirit and vehemence of devotion, which not unfrequently passed for genuine intelligent Christian humility, meekness, and fervor. Besides, there were, ultimately, many who were truly pious before their conversion to the faith, in whose souls the trials of their new and unwonted discipline, for a time, more than counterbalanced the pernicious influence of their new dogmas. Nor should it be forgotten that the most flagrant fanaticisms have usually been famed for the sanctimonious deportment of their early adherents. These and other causes, particularly the frequent and unjust persecutions which they have experienced, have tended to give the Mormons, in many instances, a reputation for piety, which, as a class, they by no means deserve, and thus have contributed much to their increase. Of the wily policy of their leaders in gaining proselytes, more will be said in the sequel.

But, however we may philosophize upon their increase or their character, one thing still remains true: their progress has been at once rapid, ridiculous, and deplorable. In less than three years after the accession of Rigdon and his followers, new churches had been built up in Missouri, Illinois, Ohio, Virginia, New York, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, and indeed in nearly all of the northern and middle, and some of the southern states. Their elders, in their reports, speak of baptizing thirty, fifty, and sometimes even one hundred and thirty persons at a single station.

In the beginning of 1833, the discarded gift of tongues again made its appearance at head-quarters. Their frequent failures in healing, discerning spirits, casting out devils, &c., rendered some new expedient needful, in order to sustain the already drooping spirits of the faithful. This new gift is said to have originated at this time with a fanatic by the name of Gifford, a Giffordite from New York. Smith at first pronounced it the work of the devil as before, but finally deemed it expedient to adopt it; and soon all tongues were in motion, with all imaginable faith and zeal. The gift is indeed extraordinary; but the rule as given by Mr. Higbee, a Mormon elder, makes the acquisition easy in the extreme. It consists simply of two items: 1. Every possible articulate sound is, in fact, some language or word, known to God, if to no one else. 2. If you would speak in tongues, trust in God, open your mouth and make sounds of some sort, and he will take care that it shall be a language. The translator proceeds in the same way; he utters whatever comes first into his mind, and the power of faith enables him and his hearers to believe it a correct translation of whatever unintelligible sounds have preceded it. Of course, they never chance to hit upon any tongue before known or heard of—though it is said that their sounds resemble the monosyllabic dialects of the Indians, as might be readily supposed.

In April, 1832, a firm was established by revelation, consisting of the principal members of the church, ostensibly for its peculiar benefit.* By previous revelation, all the property of the members had been claimed to be consecrated to the Lord.† In the Book of Covenants, p. 122, this revelation is, however, revised, so as to read *of* thy property, instead of *all* thy property. This was found expedient. The proper authorities in this big firm, however, had the entire control of all the consecrated property, which had been or could be squeezed out of the saints, according to the letter of the divine command. They proceeded to purchase lands, to lay off town lots, build temples, &c., until they were finally permitted by divine revelation to borrow money, to save themselves from bankruptcy,* which recourse failing, their leaders resorted first to their famous mercantile, and ultimately to their banking operations. In 1833, they commenced building the "temple of the Lord" in Kirtland, which ultimately was completed at a cost of about forty thousand dollars, and secured by deed to the prophet and his successors. The interior of this singular edifice was fitted up with pulpits of different altitudes, adapted to the different ranks of the priests, bishops, counsellors, elders, &c., divided into departments, and prepared with curtains, hangings, and other ornaments, suited at once to the convenience of their peculiar worship, and the appropriate display of their leaders and functionaries.†

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* B. of C. p. 219, § 20.

† See B. of Commandments 93, Eve. and Morn. Star, 1st ed. No. 3, vol. i.

In the fall of 1835, three or four hundred of their travelling elders gathered in Kirtland, and remained to pursue their studies through the winter, under the prophet and his comrades, who had secured the aid of the celebrated Hebrew teacher, Mr. Seixas, to whom Mr. Smith seemed inclined to look, in preference to his stones, or the inspired tongues of the Mormons, for a knowledge of the Hebrew. Whether the stones had become rusty, or whether the gift of the Spirit had withdrawn, and left them to the vulgar necessity of grammars and lexicons, or, whether they wished an opportunity to compare the inspired with the ordinary mode of acquiring an unknown tongue, is not yet fully revealed.

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* B. of C. 213.

† See B. of C. 213 and 233.

In 1836, an endowment meeting, or solemn assembly, was held in the temple, according to a previous commandment of Smith's divinity.* The elders expected to receive a pentecostal endowment on this occasion from the Lord, similar to that conferred of old on the disciples at Jerusalem. The day was spent in fasting, prayer, and other ceremonial preparations—such as washing their bodies in pure water, perfuming them with cologne—after which they administered the ordinance of washing each other's feet, and anointing with holy oil, with mutual blessings and benedictions. In the evening they assembled for the "*endowment.*" They first broke their fast, by eating a little light bread and drinking freely of pure wine, which they were assured would not hurt them, since it had been consecrated to the Lord. Nor did their faith stumble at this, until they learned from experience, that though the spirit was willing, the flesh was still weak. A marvellous spirit of prophecy soon ensued, as might have been expected, which vented itself mainly in blessing their friends and cursing their enemies, in which latter class, the clergy of the day and the Missouri mob received their full share. An eye-witness informed the author that he never imagined that language more awful could be used in the world of despair. Nor did the consecrated wine exhale all its inspiration on that memorable night. For several days, and even for weeks, they went from house to house, feasting and prophesying, blessing and cursing, as the occasion might require, until the "triumphs of faith" were fully achieved, and the "Spirit of the Lord was poured out upon all flesh," as they thought, though others thought it the spirit of delusion, darkness, and error.*

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* See B. of C. p. 109; verse 197 of revelation called Olive Leaf.

In 1835, the leaders found themselves some fifteen or twenty thousand dollars in debt for their temple, besides other expenses, and concluded to raise the wind again, by resorting to mercantile speculations. Accordingly, they ran the society into debt some one hundred thousand dollars, bought goods at the East, built steam-mills, bought farms, erected fine houses, &c., until the day of account drew near, when, of course, they found themselves bankrupt, and left their Mormon endorsers to foot the bill. In the Elders' Journal of 1838, the prophet complains that one single "saint," by the name of Parish, swindled twenty-five thousand dollars out of the bank. We do not know how true this may be, but we would like to know what some of the rest did. They also got up a bank, the stock of which consisted principally in personal or individual property, valued at enormous rates, with little or no specie. Bills were issued with the utmost despatch, and by all possible means, which were soon returned to their empty vaults, much to the edification of the saints, who no doubt would have escaped all embarrassment, had they not, in their weakness and depravity, begun to grow tired of the "spoiling of their goods," instead of taking it joyfully as they should have done, according to the pretended "gospel" they profess. As it was, however, secessions began to multiply, and mutual recriminations arose. They accused their leaders—the prophet, and his brothers Smith and Rigdon—of incapacity, selfishness, tyranny, and cupidity. By the leaders these accusations were retorted upon the dissenters, with threats, and charges of infidelity, wickedness, stealing, lying, counterfeiting, &c., but above all, *want of faith.* This mutual hostility of the "saints" and the prophet and his comrades increased, much to the scandal of the church and joy of the world, until, finally, Smith and Rigdon were obliged to leave Ohio, with a sheriff at their heels; and soon after, with their families, they emigrated to the Far West, in Missouri, in the winter of 1838. Some of the elders also became tired of the strife and left the place.

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* See Corrill's Hist. p. 23.

We must now leave the stake at Kirtland, Ohio—temples, endowments, farms, merchandise, bank stock, and all—and follow the Mormons to "Mount Zion, the city of the living God, the joy of the whole earth, the everlasting (?) possession of the saints," situated in the land of Missouri, the Mormons' land of peace, blessedness, and eternal felicity, "where there shall be nothing to hurt or annoy, in all my holy mountain, saith the Lord."*

The reader will see, by turning to a revelation given to Smith, in July, 1831, appointing Independence as the Mount Zion, the place of the gathering, and the site of the temple of the Lord, that Smith's divinity had not at this time formed a very intimate acquaintance with Governor Boggs and his valorous compeers in Missouri. He had been so busy in banking, trading, farming, building temples, houses, steam-mills, &c., in Ohio, that he had not had time to study minutely the naked prairies of the frontier, nor the peculiar character of Missouri backwoodsmen. However, the best miss it sometimes; and besides, there is no knowing how much the commissions, and charters, and muskets, and cannon, which the pliant servants of the good people of Illinois have conferred upon the Mormons at Nauvoo, together with their own daily practice of military evolutions, may tend to retrieve this fatal error. From July, 1831, it appears that Mount Zion, Missouri, was to be the place of general rendezvous of the saints, forevermore, and thither the tribes went up by divine command. We have already seen that the prophet, on his visit to Missouri in 1831, appointed the location of Zion at Independence, Jackson county, Missouri, and designated the spot, and laid the corner-stone of the Lord's temple. Shortly after this, the church began to assemble, by revelations through Smith, in multitudes: the ways were crowded, and the land flooded, with beggars rallying round this "house of the Lord." The old citizens of Jackson county became, at first, uneasy, and some of them even offered to sell out, but the saints were too poor to buy: the emigrants still poured in, until the citizens became alarmed for the security of their property and civil rights; and finally, on the 23d of July, 1833, they rose in their fury, demolished their printing office, tarred and feathered their bishop, Partridge, and one or two others, and, in a band of two or three hundred citizens, compelled the Mormons to agree to leave the county before spring. The Mormons, up to this time, had been guilty of no *legal* misdemeanor, as the resolves and printed reports of the mobocrats plainly show. They therefore justly considered this agreement as fraudulent and illegal, and petitioned the governor for protection and redress. He commended them to the civil law, to which they resorted in vain; for the citizens again collected by night, for pulling down houses, whipping, &c., until finally, on the 4th of

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* See Mormon books. † Book of Covenants, p. 154.

November, 1833, a conflict took place, in which three or four were killed, and in the course of three or four weeks, all the Mormons were compelled to leave Jackson county, and retreat to Ray county, where they were most hospitably received by the inhabitants, who gave them employment, paid them good wages, and conducted toward them like gentlemen and freemen. The number driven out of Jackson county was about twelve hundred. In the winter of 1833–4, Governor Dunklin endeavored to bring the citizens of Jackson county to justice, and redress the injuries of the Mormons. But after assembling the parties under the guard of the "Blues," the attorney-general advised the Mormons to abandon their suit, since justice in the case was impossible, considering the excitement and spirit of the people. They took his advice, and returned with the guard.

The knowledge of this outrage soon reached the ears of the prophet in Ohio. He saw at once the danger and advantage of their new position. Indeed, the world had become so incredulous already, and his followers so divided among themselves, that some such persecution had become almost necessary and indispensable, to arouse the sympathy and credulity of the one, and concentrate and harmonize the already distracted energies of the other. A revelation, of unusual length, clearness, and point, was soon forthcoming from the press in Kirtland, which was scattered abroad in the form of a handbill, and even sold for one dollar per copy. The main points adverted to in this command from Smith's divinity are as follows.*

1. The Mormons had been chastened because of

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* See B. of C. 235.

"jarrings, contentions, envyings, strifes, lustful and covetous desires among them," by which they had polluted "their inheritances." 2. Assurances of the favor of God, on repentance and a return to duty, and of his vengeance on their enemies. 3. An exhortation to all their "warriors and young men," and middle-aged men, to assemble and march to the rescue of their brethren, artfully concealed under the similitude of a parable of a vineyard. 4. An explicit exhortation to the Mormons, to seek redress from the civil authorities of the state and of the United States. 5. A gentle reproof, for giving up their stores, storehouses, &c. 6. An exhortation to hold on to their property in Jackson county, to the end, at all hazards, since there, and there alone, the Lord had determined to build the temple of Zion.

This proclamation had its desired effect; it restored harmony, and aroused action and sympathy. The "strength of the Lord's house" began to rally around the prophet, from all quarters of the Union, to prepare for the crusade to the *Holy Land.* Rusty swords, old cartridge-boxes, firelocks, pistols, rifles, pitchforks and butcher-knives, dish-cloths and sand-boxes, were all in motion; either groaning under the operation of needful repairs, or belching forth their valor at harmless targets, or flourishing in anticipated triumph around the heads of their Mormon friends. The needles and thimbles of women and children were alike diligent in the great work of preparation, and even the crutches of the invalid were bereft of their wonted repose.

At last, on the 4th of May, 1834, voting in solemn assembly, to be called no longer "Mormons," but the "Church of Latter Day Saints," in order that they might the more readily pass incog. on their way, without the sin of a military lie; and, having listened to the martial harangues of their leaders, the "grand army," or "army of Zion," took up their line of march in different squadrons for the promised land. They numbered about two hundred and fifty. The prophet, accoutred with the best sword in the army, an elegant brace of pistols, a rifle, four horses, and a stout bull-dog for his "aid," took the command in person.

After various adventures, (detailed by an eye-witness from the ranks,) with black-snakes, raw pork, and particularly with Smith's "aid-de-camp," the "army of Zion" arrived in Missouri in June, 1834. When once across the river, and near the scene of action, the prophet, the general of the host, deemed it expedient to go incog., and trust the command in the hands of the lieutenants and his valiant "aid." They were soon met by a committee of the mobocrats of Missouri, who were desirous of inquiring into the import of this martial array.

This meeting of the Mormons and mobocrats, reminds one of that more famous meeting of Milton's Satan and Death, at the gates of hell, except that here neither party had courage enough to even make a show of fight, though both, by their principles, were bound to do so. Perhaps, however, some snaky sorcerers began to whisper in their ears that they were both of kindred blood, of the same loving sire. Be this as it may, the mobocrats, partly through fear and partly to cover the infamy of the past from their own and the eyes of the world, offered either to sell out their own lands in the county, or to buy those of the Mormons, on the same terms, taking good care, however, to place the pay-day so near that it would be impossible for the

Mormons to raise money for the immense tracts owned by the citizens, while, on the other hand, they could easily pay for the comparatively few acres which the Mormons possessed. In Clay county a council was held, and the expedition was abandoned, and Smith returned home again. Smith's divinity seemed to be more courageous when in Ohio than when within gun-shot of the Missourians. Besides, the cholera, spite of faith and gifts of healing, broke out among them, and most of the troops dispersed and returned home in a short time.

From this time, the saints continued to gather in peace, in Clay and the adjoining counties, hoping in some way to get the promised land, until 1836, when the elders returned from their winter's drilling, in Hebrew and theology, at Kirtland, and in the course of the summer were followed by a new swarm from the parent hive. This ingress again excited the alarm and apprehensions of the inhabitants of Clay county, and the respectable citizens foreseeing the danger, immediately stipulated with the Mormons to leave the county, on condition of their securing to them a settlement in Caldwell county. The people of Caldwell gave their consent, the matter was amicably adjusted, and the church thus withdrew voluntarily to Caldwell, where they made unusual outlays in lands, improvements, &c., in the full confidence that this would prove the place of their final rest.

Friendship and mutual confidence were beginning to be restored, until the 14th of March, 1838, when Smith and Rigdon, having been, as we have seen, driven from Ohio, came to the "Far West," Missouri. They soon decided to establish new towns in several counties. One in Davis, they called Adammondiaman, or "Valley of God, in which Adam blessed his children," as they interpret it. Another, called De Witt, was established in Carroll county, and around these cities they began to rally their followers. This offended the citizens of the old and rival towns in these counties, and things began to wear a more threatening aspect, until some of the citizens openly declared that "they would not submit their counties to the rule of Joe Smith."

About this time, the Mormon leaders, beginning to feel some confidence in their own strength, abandoned their former principles of meekness, forbearance, and non-resistance, and began to talk loud, and threaten all who might oppose them.

They said "they had been harassed to death, by dissenters, lawsuits, and mobs, for seven or eight years, and they were determined to endure it no longer; that it was the will of God that the saints should fight until death, rather than endure such things, and if they would only have faith, God would protect them, if their enemies were ever so numerous, and the time was not far distant when 'one should chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight.'" Under this kind of preaching, which was the chief topic with the elders through the summer, the church became inspired with the belief that God would enable them to stand against the Union, should they come against them *en masse*. Many, however, became disgusted at these doctrines, and alarmed at their probable consequences, but remonstrance against the prophet of the Lord was of no use. Already there were many dissenters in the church, and others in whom the prophet could not confide; but, as perfect union was necessary to their success, secret meetings were held, and secret plans were laid, for rooting out the dissenters from their midst. Some had one plan, and some another, until Rigdon preached his famous "Salt Sermon," in which he gave them to understand, that, according to his text, the dissenters, who had lost their savor, ought to be literally cast out and trodden under foot by the real saints, until their bowels gushed out; and in further illustration of this doctrine, he remarked that Judas did not fall without help, but that the apostles threw him headlong, and trampled out his bowels with their feet. He said also, that, in fact, Peter stabbed Ananias and Sapphira, and the deacons carried them out and buried them. In conclusion, he recommended these pious examples to the imitation of his hearers, in the case of the dissenters, the enemies of God and man.

About this time also, June, 1838, the famous Danite society was formed. The members secretly entered into solemn covenant before God, and bound themselves on oath, with penalty of death, to keep the secrets of the society, to stand by one another in trouble, to uphold the presidency—Smith, Rigdon & Co.—and sustain it, and each other, in all they did, "whether right or wrong." They numbered about three hundred. They first went by the name of the "Big-fan," then the society was called "The Daughter of Zion," and finally, the "Danite Society." They were organized into companies of fifties and subdivisions of tens, with suitable officers, and secret signs, by which they might know each other, by day or night, in order the better to carry out their plans

Few of the church, or, indeed, of the "Danite Society," understood the real design of their leaders in all this. They were told that it was a measure of self defence against the mob; but this was only a small part of the truth: they were, in reality, the chosen agents for carrying the principles of the "Salt Sermon," and other kindred discourses against the dissenters, into execution. Some of the dissenters knew this so well, that they speedily withdrew themselves from the church and the county. Among these were John Whitmer, David Whitmer, Jacob Whitmer, Hiram Page, and Oliver Cowdery, all witnesses to the book of Mormon, and Lyman Johnson, one of the twelve apostles, and others of less note.

In one of the Danites' secret meetings, one of their leaders, by name Lyman Wight, informed them that, although they had expected that God would bring his judgments of fire and sword, famine and pestilence, upon their enemies the Gentiles, (Missourians,) as denounced in their holy books, without their aid, still the signs of the times were fast changing, and the time was not far distant when God would require his church to go forth, like the Jews of old, through the state, and slay man, woman, and child.

They also took into consideration the expediency of predicting a great pestilence among the Gentiles, and then poisoning the wells and springs of the Missourians, in order to secure its accomplishment. Some persons even went so far as to declare, "that they would kill any individuals, in or out of the church, if the presidency should say it was the will of God, for they believed it was necessary, sometimes, to do such things, to save the church from corruption and destruction." All this time, the press and pulpit were exhorting and haranguing them to purify themselves from all evil—from all things and persons offensive to God—that is, to the prophet and presidency; and so they understood it, though the reader, unapprised of the facts, would interpret their pious exhortations far otherwise. The reader will please bear this in mind, while reading pious Mormon exhortations hereafter. About this time, also, the Mormons at "Far West" organized a company, called the "Destructionists," whose leader was called "The Destroying Angel." The duty assumed by these was, to lie in wait, and if the citizens left their houses to advance upon them, they were to slip in behind, and burn their dwellings in their absence. They never, however, succeeded in their design.

On the 4th of July, 1838, Rigdon delivered a celebrated oration, which has been published. At the close, after haranguing the Mormons on the sacred principles of freedom and American citizenship, in an eloquent and appropriate strain, he concluded as follows:—"We take God to witness, and the holy angels to witness this day, that we warn all men, *in the name* of *Jesus Christ*, to come on us no more, forever. The man, or set of men, who attempt it, do it at the expense of their lives; and that mob that comes on us, to disturb us, there shall be between us and them a war of *extermination*, for we will follow them *till the last drop of their blood is spilled*, or else they will have to exterminate us: for we will carry the *war* to their *own houses*, and *their own families*, and one party or the other shall be *utterly destroyed*." "Remember it, all men: no man shall be at liberty to come into our streets to *threaten* us with mobs, for if he does, he shall atone for it before he leaves the place: neither shall he be at liberty to *vilify* and *slander* us, for suffer it we will not in this place: neither will we indulge any man, or set of men, in instituting *vexatious lawsuits* against us, to cheat us out of our rights; *if they attempt it, wo be* *unto them.* We, this day, then, proclaim ourselves free, with a purpose which never can be broken: no, never: no, never: NO, NEVER!" This oration was commended by Smith, as may be seen by the Elders' Journal of the saints, page 54, and was received at the time with shoutings and hosannas by the Mormons.

About this time, according to the affidavit of W. W. Phelps, a Mormon of great authority, and a writer of considerable note in the earlier history of Mormonism, given before the civil authorities of Missouri, and filed, and forwarded and published by the senate of the U. S., Sidney Rigdon declared before a number of Mormons, "that if the sheriff came after them, they would kill him, and if any opposed, they would take off their heads." Smith followed him in this harangue, and approved of his sentiments. At another time, a large number of Mormons entered into solemn covenant with Rigdon, in presence of the witness, (Phelps,) "that if any Mormon should even attempt to pack his goods, in order to move from the country, any one of them would kill him, and throw him aside into the brush without saying a word, and all the burial he should have should be in a 'turkey buzzard's guts.'" This was carried by acclamation, with uplifted hands. The second resolve was, "that if any stranger should appear in town, looking around, he should be despatched in like manner." This also was unanimously carried. The third was, "to conceal all things." Rigdon then remarked, "that a man yesterday slipped his breath in this way," and "if any one lisped it he should die."

J. M. Hinkle also testifies, before the same court, and in the same document, that he heard the prophet harangue the Mormon troops, when, among other things he said, "that the troops gathering through the county were all a d——d mob; that he had tried to please them long enough; that he had tried to keep the law long enough; but as to keeping the law of Missouri any longer, he did not intend to try to do so." That "the whole state was a mob set, and if they came to fight him, he would play hell with their apple-carts." He told the troops "that they had fought heretofore like devils, but now they must fight like angels; for angels could whip devils any time," &c. Several other Mormon witnesses also testify to the same. The truth is, that the accumulated disasters and disgrace of the prophet and presidency in the church, and the infamous abuse both of them and their followers by the mobs of Missouri, had rendered the leaders desperate; and by language and conduct, such as we have narrated above, they had but too successfully infused the same spirit into the great body of their followers.

They said "they had been driven from place to place, their property destroyed, their rights as American citizens trampled upon; they could get no redress from civil courts, to whom they had at first quietly appealed, nor from the executive, nor the state. They had been told by these authorities that they must take care of themselves in their hour of distress, and now they intended to do it." "They were determined to clear Davis county of dissenters and mobs, or spill their blood in the street."

The mob, on the other hand, had been equally determined to expel them, even long before any well authenticated outrage on the part of the Mormons had been committed; their fault being that they were increasing more rapidly than was pleasant or desirable to the citizens. These mobocrats succeeded in diffusing their spirit into the citizens of the adjacent counties, and insult succeeded upon insult, until finally the Mormons became utterly desperate, and they, as well as the mobocrats, exposed themselves to the just indignation of the virtuous citizens of the state, and were finally, after much plundering and skirmishing on both sides, and some bloodshed, driven en masse from the state. The number of exiles is stated at twelve thousand by the Mormons. The disgusting details of this savage war we will pass over in silence. It is said that the number of Mormons killed in these several conflicts were, in all, twenty-five or thirty, and that not less than twelve or fifteen thousand Mormons were expelled by the "exterminatory order" of Governor Boggs. Under this order they were ultimately compelled to give up their leaders to the civil authorities, to be detained in prison for trial on various charges, to surrender their arms, amounting to about 600 guns, besides swords and pistols, and give up all their property to pay their debts in Missouri, and damages in the state, and then to leave the state forthwith.

The sufferings of this abused and deluded multitude in traversing that wild and desolate country amid the bleak winds and snows of November, men, women, and children, without friends, or shelter, or food, or even clothes, were truly heart-rending and almost incredible. During these trials in Missouri, women were compelled to march barefoot, over frozen ground, until their feet bled; several gave birth to children in the woods or on the prairies, without shelter, bed, or bedding; some men were caught and most cruelly beaten—one until his bowels gushed out, and he died on the spot; and all this because he returned to Jackson county to endeavor to secure a remnant of his property.

One gang placed a Mormon prisoner in front of them, and deliberately shot him. The same gang even dug up the dead and vented their spleen upon them, when they had not courage to face the living. At the tragedy at How's Mills, October 30th, 1838, another gang of cowardly villains, 240 in number, from Grand River, after having lulled a few Mormons into quiet by false professions of peace and friendship, suddenly fell upon them at night, and drove nearly twenty into an open blacksmith's shop, and deliberately massacred them there by shooting through the logs; eighteen or nineteen fell in this wanton slaughter.

One boy, Sardius Smith, nine years old, hid under the bellows, where he was discovered after the general massacre was over, by a Mr. G., who presented his rifle near his head, and literally blowed off the upper part of it. G., it is said, has openly boasted of this detestable cowardice, and still he and his comrades are suffered to roam at large, while the Mormons, both guilty and innocent, men, women, and children, were driven from the state in the dead of winter, without shelter, food, or fire.

The facts above stated are reported on the authority of the Mormons, in a book published by John F. Green, authorized representative of the Mormons. Such facts, it is true, would be utterly incredible on this or almost any testimony, were they not alleged as the acts of mobocrats. But from such savages as advocate mob law in a free country governed solely by law, nothing better is to be expected; for it is only by shooting prisoners, hacking dead men in pieces, blowing boys' brains out, and plundering and insulting defenceless women and children, that they can show the true nature of their valorous chivalry and courage. Such outrages, doubtless, the great body of the citizens of Missouri regarded with appropriate detestation and horror. In this quarrel the Mormons were much in the wrong, and their leaders, Smith and Rigdon especially, deserved a much sorer punishment at the hands of the Missourians than they will ever get. But were Mormon women and children in fault? Did they deserve banishment or death? Were those dissenters and others who did all they could do for the state, worthy of death? Who began the quarrel? Was it the Mormons? Is it not notorious, on the contrary, that they were hunted, like wild beasts, from county to county, before they made any desperate resistance? Did they ever, as a body, refuse obedience to the laws, when called upon to do so, until driven to desperation by repeated threats and assaults on the part of the mob? Did the state ever make one decent effort to defend them, as fellow-citizens, in their rights, or to redress their wrongs? Let the conduct of its governors, attorneys, and the fate of their final petitions answer. Have any who plundered and openly massacred the Mormons ever been brought to the punishment due to their crimes? Let the boasting murderers of begging and helpless infancy answer. Has the state ever remunerated even those known to be innocent, for the loss of either their property or their arms? Did either the pulpit or the press through the state raise a note of remonstrance or alarm? Let the clergymen who abetted, and the editors who encouraged the mob, answer. We know that there were many noble exceptions; but, alas, that they were so few! We hate the Mormon imposture; it is from beginning to end utterly detestable, both in its principles and its effects. Mormonism is a monstrous evil; and the only place where it ever did or ever could shine, this side the world of despair, is by the side of the *Missouri mob.* In that position it really shines, not inherently, but from contrast; and it is indeed to be hoped that the citizens of Illinois, where the Mormons are now located, whatever may or may not come, will never disgrace their state, their nation, and their age, or degrade themselves and shame their posterity by resorting to mob law, either against the Mormons or anybody else. We have already had enough of that; it is time to stop. I know it is said that mob law is good, and even indispensable in its place. But to make it a place where it may triumph with impunity, the laws both of man and God must be suspended. True, deliberate public opinion, when given in legal forms, without passion or alarm, is the only safe fountain of authority and ground of freedom. But, when heated by present danger and excited passion, it is the most insatiate and despicable of all tyrants.

After the Mormons were thus infamously and cruelly driven from their lands and their homes, and robbed of their arms, corn, cattle, horses, swine, utensils, clothes, and indeed of all that renders life tolerable, they wandered in the dead of winter through the state of Missouri, toward the Mississippi. A large number arrived opposite Quincy, during the months of February and March, 1839, where they found the ice running so fast that they were obliged to encamp in the open woods, without clothes or shelter, on the opposite bank of the river. Among this miserable and destitute multitude, were not only naked children, and famished infants, and married women in delicate and critical circumstances, but also about twenty females, whom the savage ferocity of mob law had deprived not only of their living, but also of their husbands and friends, who had either been butchered before their eyes, as narrated above, or had sunk beneath the lingering torments of hunger, cold, despair, and want. The citizens of Quincy, to the honor of themselves, of civilization, and humanity, immediately called a public meeting, passed appropriate resolves, expressive of their abhorrence and detestation of the principles of the authors of their calamity, and entered upon a course of vigorous and systematic efforts to relieve their necessities and provide for their future wants.

A similar course of conduct toward the refugees, has in part wiped off the disgrace which the mobs of Missouri had inflicted upon human nature and the American name.

After casting about them, for a time, to retrieve their misfortunes, the prophet and his comrades selected the town of Commerce, on the Mississippi, in Hancock county, Illinois, to be the future centre of their operations, under the name of the "Stake at Nauvoo," or the beautiful city. Toward this point their forces have been concentrating for the past two years from all parts of the Union, from Canada, and even from Europe. Between eight and ten thousand have already gathered around this beautiful site—but two years since an open but fertile desert. The reader must also know, that their elders and preachers traverse, at this time, the globe, as far as Syria on the east, and the Rocky Mountains on the west; and that they have not been slow to improve their persecutions in Missouri, as a prime means of arousing sympathy and securing proselytes. They now boast one hundred thousand converts in the United States and Canada, besides multitudes in the old world. This is probably an exaggeration, but their forces have undoubtedly been increased, both from the utter negligence of the wise, and the infamous persecution of their foes. They have also many other "stakes" or centres, in other places, the names of which are unknown. Their leaders have again succeeded in regaining the confidence of the multitude, whom they train to speak with the same voice, and strike with the same arm. Indeed, nothing can exceed the utter and abject subordination of the hordes at their heels, who still imagine that they are governed by no law, and no rule, save only the direct teaching of the Spirit of God in their own souls. Nothing can offend them sooner, than to intimate that they are governed by Joseph Smith; and yet his voice is to them the voice of destiny and of God. Many, however, daily fall from the faith, especially of those who are allowed most intimate acquaintance at head-quarters. But other multitudes fill up their ranks; and such is the unbounded sway of the prophet over their minds, that they will not believe a word spoken against him or his church, either by a dissenter or any one else. "They are all Gentile lies," or "dissenters' lies:" their papers tell them so, and they believe it. Nor will the absurdities and contradictions of their inspired works have the least weight to change their minds, though pointed out to them by scores. "I know, after all, that Mormonism is true," say they, "for God has revealed it to my own conscience by his Spirit."

Their leaders are now launching out again, to procure the handling of a little more cash. Accordingly, at the last session of the legislature of Illinois, they obtained six charters: one incorporating their city with peculiar privileges; another incorporating a standing army, under the name of the "Nauvoo Legion;" another incorporating a company for the building of a temple, worth some one hundred thousand dollars; another for building a tavern-house, worth one hundred thousand dollars more; another for incorporating a school for the prophets, under the name of the Nauvoo University, and another for incorporating a manufacturing company. All these objects will of course cause a pretty sum of money to pass through the hands of the prophet and his friends; and should they turn bankrupt, as they did in Ohio, it is not to be presumed that these servants of the Lord would allow any of this filthy lucre to stick to their fingers.

Such, in general, are their present condition and prospects. Many, who were intimately acquainted with their distracted condition at the commencement of the mobs in Jackson county, Missouri, and even some who belonged to the society, and were on the ground at the time, were fully of the opinion that the errors of their leaders previous to that crisis would have proved irretrievable, had it not been for the opportune and signal aid of the mob, who at once put into their power the means of diverting the minds of their followers from the multiplied sources of doubt and despair which were fast thickening around them, and had virtually withdrawn already many from their ranks, to concentrate their energies and animate their passions and their hopes anew, and, by the cry of persecution and martyrdom, to throw themselves upon the same exalted station of the saints and martyrs of old, and thus rouse the before listless attention of the unbelieving multitude, and rally both their prayers and their sympathies to their aid.

Whether this be true or not, such results, and such only, are always to be looked for and expected from persecutions. And if it at last shall prove that the Missourians threw an egg from their casket, which else had rotted on their hands, only that it might hatch a scorpion to nestle in the bosoms of their sons, they may thank themselves for their pains. Neither the laws, nor the constitution, nor their country, nor their age, nor yet the wisest and best of the citizens of their own state, advised them to such a course. They may smile at such a suggestion; but, before we close, we shall adduce some facts to show why they have reason to fear that they may yet be wet with their own blood, if some remedy, more just and more potent than mobocracy, be not speedily applied to the fanaticism of the Mormons. Should the Mormons rally their forces, and invade Missouri, as their leaders undoubtedly design, and should the other states, as perhaps they might, when called to the rescue, reply—that it is a job of their own seeking, that they commenced the quarrel without authority and without advice, and now they may fight it out—should these things, we say, happen, it is not difficult to foresee that a terrible retribution would ensue; and many of the ambiguous prophecies of Smith would be at once interpreted and fulfilled. But we hope for better things; we hope that both the ferocity of arms, and the stupidity of silent contempt, will give place to the resistless force of argument, and the cheering and convincing light of reason and truth.

Our authorities for the brief and general statements made above, are the documents submitted to Congress by the Missouri legislature; "Facts relative to the expulsion of the Mormons," by John P. Green; "History of the Church of Latter Day Saints," by John Corril; Winchester's "Biography of Dr. Hurlbert;" "Boothe's Letters;" the various periodicals and publications of the Mormons at the time of the mob, and "Mormonism Portrayed," by William Harris.

Some of these authorities throw the whole blame of the Missouri war upon one party, and some upon the other: we are disposed to share it equally between them. We deem Mormons and mobocrats about an equal match, saving always the helpless wives and children of both parties.

Smith's present pecuniary operations consist mainly in purchasing land at a low price, laying out town lots, and selling at high prices to his followers. He has made several towns in this manner, in Illinois and Iowa. During the past year, he has made two proclamations to his followers, throughout the world, to come and gather around him, and the ten thousand Mormons in England, and the one hundred thousand on this continent, are all in motion. Nauvoo increases by thousands annually. In the "Times and Seasons," of June 1, 1841, a revelation is given, addressed to all the kings of the earth, and all the saints, commanding them to bring their gold and silver, and precious stones, &c., &c., and lay them at the feet of the prophet, for building the splendid temple at Nauvoo. It runs on this wise:—"Awake, O kings of the earth; come ye, O! come ye, with your gold and silver, to the help of my people, to the house of the daughter of Zion!" &c. They are also informed that all must *baptize for the dead, at the temple at Nauvoo,* after it is completed. This must eventually concentrate all Mormons around Nauvoo. Their standing army, chartered by the state of Illinois, is kept constantly on the drill, under their general. Their books are full of prophecies of the utter destruction of all unbelievers, and the overthrow of all governments save their own, and still, full of the most courteous professions of subjection to the civil power. See B. C., pages 191, 95, 117; Voice of Warning, page 186, &c., where it will be seen that unbelievers "shall be cut off," brought "under the feet" of the Mormons, "torn in pieces," "destroyed from off the face of the land," &c., &c., and that too, as Pratt prophesies, in *less than fifty years.* Their leaders understand all this; their followers do not. It will, probably, be first expounded in full to the Missourians, for Smith's divinity is definitely and positively pledged to retake Zion in Jackson county, either by stratagem or force, or the whole scheme must inevitably fail, even with the Mormons. This explains the gathering at Nauvoo, on the borders of Missouri. Our demagogues would do well to look at these things, before they involve us in a civil war with our sister state.

Smith has also issued his mandate, enjoining all his followers to assemble at the polls, and vote for the democratic ticket at the next election. This also explains the silence of many presses, and the pliancy and sycophancy of the demagogues in both political parties. Some of them flatter and fawn around the Mormons; all fear them. This is truly alarming. Real estate constantly falls in value, in their vicinity, except that held by Mormons.

CHAPTER III.

COMPARISON OF MORMOMISM WITH SIMILAR FANATICISMS.

Instinct of faith—Instinct of independence—Desire of power—Operation of these to produce general credulity and fanaticism—False Messiahs—Peculiar analogous fanaticisms—Serpentinians—Millenarians—Circoncelleones—Stylites—Eonites—Beghards—Quietists—Whippers, Dancers, Jumpers, and Men of Understanding—Anabaptists—Davidists—Illuminati—Knipperdolings—Madame Bowrignon—Seekers—Muggletonians—Camisards—Falling Swords—Swedenborgians—Salem witchcraft—Glassites—Ann Lee—Jemima Wilkinson—Joanna Southcote—Richard Brothers—French infidels—Mad Thom, Dilks, Davidson, Miss Campbell, Irving, Mathias, and Joe Smith—Successive crops of fanatics and causes—General agreement of fanatics—The bottle conjuror—Love of exciting marvels—Rule for fanatics.

HAVING considered the rise and progress of Mormonism, we pause for a moment to compare it with similar delusions.

Much of the history of our race, in respect to religion, is the history of fanaticism. Amid so vast an amphitheatre of religious lunatics, we shall find some more eccentric, if not more insane, than others; and by casting our eyes back upon the scene, and reflecting upon the credulity and weakness of the race, we shall be better prepared to appreciate this new development of human folly, and to contemplate its absurdities without either amazement or alarm.

There are three fundamental principles which sway the destinies of the human race.

1. The religious element in the nature of man, which I shall call the *instinct of faith.*

2. *The instinct of independence.*

3. *The desire of power.*

These instincts, propensities, or tendencies, exist in all; but the two former are more fully developed in the multitude, while the more exorbitant and striking manifestations of the latter are seen only in the few.

By the instinct of faith I do not mean any principle that is so inherent in the nature of man, that its development appears at the moment of his birth, and which cannot, by any possible combination of influences, be made to disappear. But I mean a universal propensity to worship, and to fear some higher power than human, which, by the necessary action of external influences and events, is invariably developed, before the period of maturity, in all the appropriate circumstances of human existence. Thus the instinctive nature of man leads him to build houses, wear clothes, and eat bread, though he neither builds houses nor eats bread at his birth, and though some savages, or maniacs, may be found who live on roots in the open air. Still, such a state is no more proved to be the nature of man than that it is the nature of fish to live on dry land, because a few are found flouncing in an exhausted pool.

In this sense man alone, of all other animals, is endowed with a *religious instinct*, or an INSTINCT OF FAITH. His nature impels him to be a religious being; to worship and to fear some power higher than human. Skeptics may rail at this; they cannot help it. They may call this propensity the result of reason or of superstition, of chance, of education, of wisdom, or of folly; it is still human nature; and it will plead with, and warn even them, sometimes, in spite of themselves. And whether philosophical or unphilosophical, the attempt to exterminate it is as vain as to attempt to exterminate human nature itself, and let man still live. Pride, passion, and lust may either pervert or expel it, as the love of brandy sometimes expels the desire of water. Still God, the omnipotent and the wise, has made man to be a true and rational worshipper of himself; and man cannot avoid the action of this propensity without depraving and degrading every principle of his moral and social nature. He must be a religious being in some way. The only question is whether truth and reason, or folly and nonsense, shall lie at the basis of his devotion. If he will not bow before the omnipotent God, and yield to the clemency of heaven, he must fall before human absurdities, and be crushed by the arrogance of man. Hence every departure from the true and rational worship of God is based on *credulity;* for it necessarily implies the belief of some absurdity. Atheism itself is not mere unbelief; it implies actual belief in the grossest of all absurdities, not excepting the worship of Juggernaut.

These religious elements take such a deep hold of human nature that they necessarily move and control all else. Hence if you move and control these, you give direction to all the energies of his nature. Prostituted to falsehood, they are ever the ready and most efficient instruments of the tyrant and the despot. Guided by reason and truth, they are the sole foundation of personal freedom and safety, and of public order and peace.

2. THE INSTINCT OF INDEPENDENCE, or an instinctive aversion to all restraint whatever, come from what source it may, is another fundamental element in human nature.

We all naturally love to think, speak, act, and feel as we please; to follow our momentary and transient impulses, without hindrance or restraint, right or wrong. To be without this aversion to restraint, this innate love of licentious freedom, is to be more or less than human. Call it selfishness, call it depravity, call it what you will, it IS human nature, and, so far as we can see, it is absolutely inseparable, not only from human nature, but from all animal existence.

Its influence throughout animal nature is as constant and universal as the law of gravitation, and its tendency, when unrestrained by higher instincts and principles, is always in the same direction, DOWNWARD, from the angel toward the brute. It was made to direct and control all animals, except where some higher power interposes; and it was designed to guide and control man, except where God interposes through rational appeals to the instinct of faith. It was designed at once to ensure the proper and rational independence and integrity of the individual, and to rescue him from all rule and all control, save the just and needful sway of heaven. In the mouth of the Christian apostles, it says, "Whether it be right to fear man more than God, judge ye;" but, perverted in the mouth of a Voltaire, it says, "Crush the wretch!!!"

It must, however, in general own a God. But the true God is all-seeing and omnipotent. His claims are necessarily omnipotent. *It must be religious.* But the restraints of rational worship, though both natural and salutary, are at once onerous, constant, and ever present. *It yields to the instinct of faith because it cannot help it.* But it would fain stipulate for more freedom than either truth or the rational worship of the true God can give. Hence it corrupts religion, and thus avoids God by stratagem, since it cannot do it by force. It bows to falsehoods and humbugs of its own creation, and thus, by grasping at more freedom than either God or truth can give, it massacres all freedom and all safety, and, in the end, by an act of suicide, it destroys itself. It hesitates to bound upward toward heaven; it stumbles and falls into hell.

3. INSTINCTIVE DESIRE OF POWER.—But, indomitable as is this aversion to restraint, there is one thing which every son of Adam loves a little better than this much-desired freedom; and that is a little *power*. Give them that little, and they want a little more—and a little more—and so on, until the whole world is beneath their feet; and then, like Alexander of old, they sit down and cry for a *little more power*. This instinctive love of power was designed to stimulate us to the acquisition of those high moral and intellectual endowments, in which, above all, natural excellence and superiority consists; and to impel us to the use of these commanding qualities for the benefit, instruction, guidance, and elevation of those less highly favored than ourselves. But it has been perverted and prostituted to ends purely selfish. It was designed to acquire and dispense truth for the good of the race. It has grasped sophistry and lies, and wielded them, of course, only for destruction. This perversion results from the fact that it exists in, and works among a race, who, as we have seen, in a matter of the highest concern, love a lie better than the truth.

These three fundamental principles or instincts of humanity, if allowed to act as God designed, would constitute the true freedom and glory of our nature. But, when perverted, they become the most efficient instruments of tyranny, degradation, and shame. It cannot be shown that moral and accountable beings could exist without them; nor that their perversion and consequent evils could be prevented, except by the protracted and terrible experience of the mischiefs that ensue. Be this as it may, all these instincts were originally angels of mercy. Two of them, by perversion have become devils, and made war upon the third. Here, then, is human nature, with one pure impulse from heaven, struggling against two perverted impulses from hell. Hitherto the base and the malign have grappled the pure and the good by the throat, and held it in the dust. But their grasp is hourly relaxing, and their ultimate defeat is both glorious and sure.

Hitherto the love of power for selfish ends, in the few, and the aversion to natural religious restraint, in the many, have co-operated in prostituting the instinct of faith, through the most absurd schemes of superstition and credulity, to the vilest ends of tyranny, licentiousness, and lust.

The multitude must have some scheme of faith: they have hated the restraints of the true one. The few have perceived the predicament of the many, and, sympathizing with their aversion to the gospel, they have devised and imposed upon them schemes of false religion better suited to their own ends, of political or spiritual tyranny and misrule. But, when the hand of oppression has become intolerable, the multitude have not unfrequently defied at once all faith and all control, and rushed from the absurdities of superstition and abject submission to the still greater absurdities of atheism and anarchy. They, however, brave the roar of the cataract, only to sink in the abyss of a more hideous and pestilential fanaticism. They should sail upstream instead of down; but this implies labor and restraint, from which they shrink, because they see it. But what lies below the rapids is unseen, until it is experienced.

The operation of these inevitable causes has, in all ages, divided the majority of mankind into two general classes, so far as their religious history is concerned. A small class, who, from the desire of political or spiritual power, have aspired to teach, and a large class, whose only business it has been to believe. "The knaves said so, and the fools believed them." These nine words exhibit an epitome of the religious history of the majority of our race, atheists, deists, and all, except the very few who have honestly yielded to the law of nature and of God. Here is the grand arena on which knaves have piped and fools have danced, throughout all generations.

From among those whom we have here dignified with the name of teachers, we do not exclude the self-styled philosophical atheist. Nor do we include those who teach any form of rational or true religion; nor yet any of those multitudinous fanatics and lunatics, who either originate absurd notions, from insanity, or receive them, second hand, from adroit villains, and propagate them from sheer credulity. These either fall in regular order among the marshalled dupes of the craft, or form an eccentric platoon of maniacs in the rear. In the ranks of imposture, we place only the ambitious and selfish originators of absurd dogmas of either superstition or skepticism. Some of these have sought political power, like Mohammed. Others have aspired to spiritual rule, like the autocrats of India and of Rome. Others have aimed at intellectual and social elevation or literary fame, like the French atheists. Others are looking at social elevation, through ecclesiastical or spiritual sway, as many among the shoals of ambitious sectarians, reformers, and system-mongers of modern christendom. Now all these, of course, profess the purest motives. We cannot believe them; the world has lived too long. Our charity may force our incredulity to admit, that, in many cases, they themselves are not fully conscious of the strength of the selfish motives which urge them onward. This is the best opinion we can form of them, till the world lives its life over again, or we get a new revelation from heaven.

These three causes, the necessity of faith, the aversion to restraint in the many, and the love of power in the few, have conspired to make the religious history of the mass of mankind a history of credulity and infatuation. Mormonism is not an exception to the general rule. It is but one of the many hideous errors imposed, by the lust of power, on the credulity of the multitude.

In all ages of the world the majority of mankind, both in Christian and heathen lands, have been ready to believe any thing in religion, however absurd, provided it was both *false* and *absurd*, and proffered eternal happiness, or at least eternal exemption from merited punishment, as the reward of belief, without the pain and trouble of a thorough moral reformation.

Melancholy and degrading as this picture is, it is the true picture of human nature and human society. Beginning from our great progenitor and descending to our own times, throughout the long track of five thousand years, in the religious history of our world, we traverse an immense swamp of credulity and lies. With the exception of the few spots which have been reclaimed and fertilized by the genial influences of Christianity, uncorrupted, we see nothing but darkness, desolation, and death; we hear nothing but the boastings of hypocrites and the creaking of their torturing engines of cruelty, followed by the sighs, and groans, and mortal agonies of unnumbered millions of poor deluded dupes, or of martyrs to the true faith of the gospel.

If perchance a ray of light divine flit athwart the scene, it is only to make us more sensible of the darkness which envelops us, and to reveal, for a moment, more clearly the horrid and detested phantoms that hover about our path.

Through the whole line of our march, the only verdant spot we meet is found "fast by the oracles of God," and the only solitary being in human shape, who can for a moment challenge our faith on his own responsibility, is Jesus of Nazareth; and even his divine words had scarce fallen from his lips, before these same demoniac principles were again inciting men, with more than satanic skill, to distort, pervert, and corrupt them; and again the darkness and the terrors close around us. Even while the chosen and inspired Paul lived, this "mystery of iniquity" was already at work.

In proof of these positions, we need not stop to survey the splendid temples, the lying oracles, the besotted priests, the sacrificial pomp, the polluted and Bacchanalian worship of the detestable gods of the philosophic Greeks, or of the grave and invincible Romans, or the multitudinous similar faiths, which infested the globe before the coming of Christ.

Nor need we contemplate the hundreds of millions of pagan lands in our own day, with their sacrificial cars, crushing or crippling thousands as they move along, their rivers swollen with the bodies of the dead, or re-echoing with the groans of the dying; age, helpless and tottering, either left to starve in solitude, or hurried away to the altars of their truculent gods; infants, writhing in the death-grasp of a mother's hand; mothers, shrinking in wild and frantic despair from the burning funeral pile—fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters gathering around the direful scene, and vainly attempting to drown the agonies of their victim with tumultuous and triumphant shouts! The dead and dying forgotten or despised, the living tortured with the consciousness of *what is*, and agonized with the fear of what is to come; crushed beneath the tyranny of the present hour, and expecting an aggravation of their woes in the next. Heartless, soulless, homeless, and undone, they still cling to the creed which engendered, and the faith which fosters their woes, because ambitious knaves so teach, and they obediently and devoutly believe. Yet this is the boasted religion of nature, and the freedom of nature, when nature is left free and untrammelled to work its own cure.

But we pass on to the history of revealed religion. We pause neither upon the ceaseless rebellions, revolts, and apostacies of the Jews, nor upon that awful and final catastrophe of their fate, when mothers sliced and ate their young, and Titus floated their devoted walls and temple in blood. We will not dwell upon the crusades, nor upon the Mohammedan delusion, originating in slaughter, and pregnant with lies more incredible than ordinary powers can imagine or conceive of; nor yet upon that hideous, that immense, that most terrific perversion of the mild and beneficent religion of Jesus, which under the Papacy held the human race, through twelve long centuries of agony and despair, in the very crucible of tyranny, and extorted from them the last pang, the last groan, of which human nature and human endurance is capable.

We will pass by all these cases, though in themselves they comprise the history of the vast majority of the human race throughout the world. Still, it may be said, that all these monstrous absurdities sprung up amid surrounding darkness, and held their despotic sway from the peculiarity of the ages in which they originated; that they engrossed to themselves the public sentiment of large portions of the globe, instead of hanging, as Mormonism does, as a mere local and loathsome excrescence on the surface of a more healthful and vigorous body politic. And although this does not relieve the matter, still we will pass on to look only at those temporary and local impostures, which have sprung up in eras and under circumstances in which such infatuations might have been deemed entirely impracticable.

And first, the world has witnessed, since the coming of Christ, more than twenty false Messiahs or pretended Christs, who have obtained sufficient notoriety to live on the pages of history, besides shoals of similar pretenders, whose memory has rotted with their bones. We will briefly note, as specimens, a few of those whose memory still survives.

The first one of much note was one Caziba, who lived in the second century. The Jews acknowledge that they lost between five and six hundred thousand souls, in fighting against the Romans in defence of this pretender. Here is human credulity. When the true Messiah came, and fulfilled all their own sacred prophecies before their own eyes, and wrought wonders and gave signs from heaven above and earth beneath, they crucified him. Why? Because they hated the restraints of true religion. Again, when a few years after an impostor arises, without a solitary proof of either authority or virtue, they rally around him, and pour out their blood like water in his defence. Why? They loved to indulge in the false hopes of a false and preposterous faith. This is human nature in all ages and climes.

In 434, another pretender arose, called Moses, who persuaded the Jews in the island of Crete to abandon their houses and lands, and to assemble on a given day on a rock overhanging the sea, from which they were to cast themselves into the deep, that he might conduct them in safety (Joe Smith like) to their promised land, the Mount Zion of old. Multitudes came, and men, women, and children, without the least hesitation, threw themselves headlong into the sea, until at last so great a number were drowned as to open the eyes of the rest.

In 529, another by the name of Julian appeared, who, after an immense slaughter of his followers, was taken and put to death by the Emperor Justinian.

In 1157, another arose in Spain, under whose guidance almost all the Jews in that kingdom surrendered themselves to utter extermination.

In 1167, another arose in Arabia, who pretended that if he should be beheaded, he should come to life again.

The Arabian king took him at his word, and ended the delusion by taking off his head.

In 1199, another arose in Persia, called David El David. Vast numbers of the Jews were butchered for following this impostor. The twelfth century, alone, produced no less than ten of these false Christs, who brought prodigious calamities upon the Jews, in various parts of the world; and though their names may be forgotten, their deeds of infamy will still live.

In 1666, immediately after the dreadful massacre of the Jews in Persia, Sabbatai Levi appeared in Smyrna, a man of learning, and an impostor of surpassing skill among the Jews. They flocked around him in multitudes, and styled him "*The King, our King and Lord, the man elevated to the height of all sublimity, the Messias of the God of Jacob, the true Messiah, the celestial Zion, Sabbatai Levi.*" He promised them deliverance from captivity, and, to hasten and ensure the day, they gave themselves up to all kinds of religious austerities and enthusiasms. Some starved themselves by fasting, others buried themselves in the earth, until their limbs grew stiff and useless; some dropped melted wax upon their flesh; some rolled naked in the snow, until frozen; others immersed themselves in cold water, in winter; and others, still, burned themselves alive. Many of his followers fell into strange ecstacies, and fits of prophesying. Four hundred men and women predicted his growing kingdom, and even infants, before they could talk, pronounced him the "Messiah, the Son of God." The people heard voices from their bowels, fell into trances, foamed at the mouth, and predicted the coming triumphs of their Messiah. When brought before the Cadi, or justice of the peace, they saw a pillar of fire between him and that functionary. The grand seignior finally ordered him before him. The Jews believed that the messengers and janisaries, sent to escort him, all fell dead, and were restored at the word of his mouth. Though barred, bolted, and chained in prison, they fancied that they saw him daily walking the streets, with chains of gold about his limbs. Finally, the grand seignior gave him his choice, either to stand as a target for his archers, or to turn Mohammedan; he wisely chose the latter. But still, the Jews insisted that it was not their Messiah, but only his shadow or spirit, which they saw walking the streets, in the garb, and with the beard of a Mussulman, and that God had taken his body to heaven, and would again return him in his own due time.

These few will serve as specimens of the whole. It is worthy of remark, that all these, and scores of others, pretended, as Smith and Co. now do, that they were raised up of God to fulfil the ancient prophecies, and restore the Jews to their promised land. Like Smith and Co., they based their claims on a literal interpretation of prophecy, found manifold texts as explicit as the Mormon wall, the stick of Ephraim, the flying angel, &c., &c., are now in favor of the Mormons. They added miracles and prodigies, wherever they were wanted, and found dupes enough to believe and run after them, and sacrifice all earthly good to their preposterous claims, as the Mormons now do to the claims of Smith.

The Serpentinians, *or Ophites*, arose in the second century. They were so called because they believed that the serpent, spoken of in Genesis, who taught mankind "good and evil," was Jesus Christ. Hence they worshipped the live serpent, which they kept in a kind of cage. Before their sacrament, they opened the cage door, and made the serpent crawl out, mount upon a table, and twine himself about the loaves of bread, which they used for the sacrament.

The MILLENARIANS arose under one Carpocrates, sixty years after Christ. They increased rapidly after the council of Nice, in the year 340, and their doctrines have been caught up, and reiterated by almost every fanatical sect which has appeared since. They believed that Christ would literally reign on earth a thousand years. Hence their name. All who have part in the first resurrection, were to reign with him; Jerusalem was to be gloriously rebuilt; the saints were to see Christ descend from heaven to the new Jerusalem, to reign with patriarchs, prophets, and saints, in perfect bliss, for a thousand years. Then they were to ascend with Christ to heaven, to enjoy forever the second resurrection. At the first resurrection, there was to be a great destruction among all nations; at the second, the wicked and the saints were to pass into their final state of retribution. Others since have modified these doctrines somewhat, to suit the prejudices of their age, but all proceed alike, upon what they call a literal interpretation of the twentieth chapter of Revelations, and similar passages.

The CIRCONCELLIONES arose in the beginning of the fourth century, among the Donatists in Africa. They renounced labor, professed continence, and wandered in hordes, with loose women, about the country, as the professed "*vindicators of justice, and protectors of the oppressed.*" They at first went armed with clubs, which they called "Clubs of Israel," and which they handled with such cruel skill as to break the bones of their victims without killing them, and then left them to die a languishing and protracted death. They took life at once, only as a favor. They sometimes filled the eyes of the wretches whom they had crushed with blows, with lime and vinegar, and thus left them to their torments. The dissolute women, who accompanied them in their brutal debaucheries, they called the "Sacred Virgins," and their chief was named "Chief of the Saints." In their onset upon their defenceless victims, they shouted "Praise be to God!" a signal of slaughter more terrible than the roaring of the lion. After having glutted themselves with blood, they turned their rage upon themselves, and sought the death of martyrs with the same fury with which they dispensed the death of heresy to others. They raged only against those whom they deemed heretics. These deluded people only "contended earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," as they maintained!! They continued their ravages in Africa through half a century, and were finally crushed only by the civil power of Rome.

The fanatical sect called the STYLITES, or Pillar Saints, originated with Peter the Stylite, in the fifth century. In order to be nearer heaven, this fanatic spent a great part of his life on the tops of different pillars, the last of which was forty cubits, or about sixty feet, in height, and but three feet in diameter at the top, with a slight balustrade around the edge. Here he remained, day and night, in all weathers, for thirty-seven years, devoting himself to prayers, fastings, prostrations, and haranguing and healing the multitude who thronged around him.

He finally died in prayer on the top of his pillar, in the sixty-ninth year of his age. So precious an example human vanity, fanaticism, and folly, could not, of course, fail to improve. Multitudes inherited his faith, and from imitating his example, so far as they were able, they have been called Stylites or Pillar Saints.

In the year one thousand, a man named Leutard, in the village of Voitres, in the diocese of Chalons, pretended to be a prophet, and deceived many. He affirmed that one day, while lying down in the field, a great swarm of bees entered the lower part of his body, passed with a great buzzing out at his mouth, and after stinging him severely, communicated to him some supernatural instruction for the edification of the church. The silly multitude, as usual, ran after him until his hypocrisy was detected by the bishop, and then the maniac prophet drowned himself in a well.

In 1148, another lunatic appeared in Brittagne, by the name of *Eon*, who believed that he was the judge of the quick and the dead. He was at last thrown by the Catholic church into prison, where he died. But his followers, not convinced even by his death, still persisted in their delusion, and numbers died at the stake, in attestation of the sincerity of their faith. The Mormons, we are told, as well as many others, have laid down their lives in the same way.

In the thirteenth century the Beghards, or Brethren and Sisters of the Free Spirit, arose and spread over Italy, France, and Germany. They were also called Turlupins.

They held, as some affirm, that, by protracted, unnatural effort at religious contemplation, men could divest themselves of the instincts of nature; a favorite dogma among enthusiasts of all ages, in some form or other.

They professed to live without any other rule than simply to follow the leadings of the Spirit. And since the excitement of any libidinous desire, or any sense of modesty or shame indicated that they were still very far from God, in order to accustom themselves to habits of indifference and self-denial, they not only lodged promiscuously, but held their principal religious meetings in a state of perfect nudity, male and female. And yet so great was the strength of their religious hallucination, that they are said for many years to have been chaste and devout.

Neither popes, nor cardinals, nor anathemas, nor bulls, nor fagots, could arrest the rapid spread of this fanatical sect. In attestation of the sincerity of their faith, multitudes of these, too, surrendered all earthly hope, and expired cheerfully, and calmly, amid the flames or upon the rack. Some think their follies are exaggerated, as perhaps they are; and if they stood alone it would be rational, as well as charitable, to admit it.*

In the year 1281, *Wilhemina*, a delirious Bohemian woman, died at Milan. She first seems to have persuaded herself, and then others, that the Holy Spirit had assumed human nature in her person, in order, through her, to save the Jews, Saracens, and false Christians; and she imagined that she was destined to suffer on the cross for them, as Christ had done for real Christians. After her death and burial, her numerous followers still believed, and not a few of these also perished in the flames, in attestation of their sincerity.†

In the fourteenth century, the QUIETISTS, or *Navel*

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* Mosheim, Vol. II., pages 409, 480, 540.

† Ibid., p. 412.

Souls, appeared in the South, first at Mount Athos, in Greece.

They seated themselves daily in some retired corner and fixed their eyes steadfastly upon their navels, until a wonderful divine illumination beamed forth upon them, and diffused through their souls peculiar delight. By this process they imagined that they acquired peculiar insight into the spiritual world, saw God himself with their bodily eyes, and other things equally strange and unutterable.

In the seventeenth century, *Molinos*, a Spanish priest, and Madame Guyon, in France, revived many of their notions, and spread them over Italy, Spain, France, and the Netherlands.* Emperors, popes, monks, and cardinals discussed the merits of this mighty wonder in successive solemn councils. They finally concluded that such a divine illumination was in accordance with the Scriptures and the dogmas of the church. The poor monks being thus allowed to look at their navels, without roasting for it, they soon became tired of it, and concluded that they could see as well by looking some other way.

About the year 1260, a sect called the *Flagellants* arose in Italy, under one Rainer, a hermit, and was propagated throughout almost all Europe. A great number of persons, of all ages and sexes, walked two and two in solemn procession, whipping their bare shoulders until the blood ran down to their heels, in order to obtain mercy from God by mortifying the flesh.

They substituted these cruel lacerations for all other religious duties and privileges, not excepting even baptism and the Lord's Supper. This displeased the Papists, who tried in vain to suppress their spread by substituting burning for scourging. They continued to spread for two hundred years.

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* Mosheim, Vol. II., page 476.

The *Merry Dancers* appeared in the Belgic provinces, and spread, alongside of these Whippers, in the year 1373. Instead of scourging their backs, or looking at their navels in quiet seclusion, they ran from house to house and danced with all their might, until they fell exhausted, and thus saw wonderful sights and visions.*

In 1760, a kindred sect of JUMPERS arose in Wales, who substituted jumping for dancing, with shouts of glory, amen, &c. These several receipts of the Quietists, Flagellants, Dancers, Jumpers, &c., for obtaining the influences of the Spirit, all succeeded equally well, so long as faith was ardent and persecution severe.

In 1411, another sect arose, called MEN OF UNDERSTANDING, headed by an ignorant fellow by the name of Cautor. They denied that any one could understand the Scriptures without peculiar divine illumination, as many of the Mormons now do. They pretended to have divine visions, and promised a better and more perfect revelation of the will of God than the Scriptures; which we doubtless realize in the Book of Mormon.

In 1691, *Rosamond Juliana*, a noble lady of Asseburgh, was favored with divine visions, saw and conversed with God himself, and reported commands from him. She also proclaimed the Mormon doctrine of Christ's literal reign, for 1000 years, on earth, and the final restoration of all things, on the direct authority of

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* Mosheim, Vol. II., page 481.

God. Many received and promulgated her opinions, but nevertheless their expected Millenium did not come, as predicted.*

In 1525, a sect called the *Anabaptists* arose in Germany, amid the turmoil of Luther's reformation. They were headed for a time by one Thomas Munster, the Joe Smith of the clan, himself at once their prophet and general. They pretended to be the peculiar favorites of heaven, the chosen instruments of God to effect the millenium reign of Christ on earth. They believed that they had familiar personal intercourse with God, that they were on an equal footing with the prophets and apostles of old, and were armed against all opposition by the power of working miracles. Their pretended visions, miracles, and prophecies soon kindled the flame of fanaticism in the minds of the peasants, and excited great commotion and consternation throughout Europe. Their prophet finally appealed to the sword, under the absurd pretence that Christ was about to assert his millenium reign on earth, by force of arms. About five thousand of them were slain in battle, the rest routed, and their leader put to death.

In 1532, John Matthias assumed the command of these fanatics, and ordered them to assemble at the town of Munster, which was declared to be the "MOUNT ZION OF GOD" by express revelation, where the saints were to assemble and reign, in Mormon glory, over the kings of the earth forever. They were finally besieged by the civil authorities, and after a terrible havoc, in which the saints lost over one hundred thousand lives, "Mount Zion" was taken, and the Joe Smith of the day put to death.

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* Mosheim, Vol. III., page 441.

In the same year, 1525, *David George*, a native of Delft, proclaimed himself the true Messiah, and declared that he was sent by God to the earth again, to fill heaven with people, which he said was quite empty, for want of people to deserve it. He declared the doctrines of scripture insufficient, without his additions. At his death he promised his disciples that he would rise again at the end of three years. This prediction proved true; for, at the appointed time, the magistrates ordered him dug up and burnt by the common hangman. This unexpected mode of resurrection somewhat puzzled his disciples, who took the name of DAVIDISTS from their leader. He died in 1556.

About the year 1540, *Ignatius Loyola*, the founder of the Jesuits, pretended to peculiar favor and intimacy with heaven. During this same period also, the *Effrontes* made their appearance, a fanatical sect, who scraped their foreheads with a knife until they bled, and then poured oil into the wound, instead of baptism.

In 1575, immediately after the dreadful massacre of St. Bartholomew, a new sect of mystics appeared in Spain, and spread over France, under one Anthony Buckuet. They called themselves ILLUMINATI, and held in substance to the doctrines of the ancient Quietists. They taught that none of the doctors of the church knew any thing about religion; that Paul and Peter were well-meaning men, but knew nothing of devotion; that the whole church lay in darkness and unbelief, and that in ten years their creed would be received all over the world.

In the year 1616, ANTOINETTE BOURIGNON was born in Lisle, in France, and proclaimed her doctrines as the climax of illuminism. At her birth, she was so de-formed that it was debated whether it was not proper to stifle her as a monster. Nevertheless, in after life she travelled through France, England, Scotland, and Holland; and by pretending to divine inspiration, she found plenty of admirers, and founded a sect which bore her name.

Cotemporaneous with Madam *Bourignon*, BERTRAND KNIPPERDOLING founded the sect of KNIPPERDOLINGS. He taught, as Smith now does, that the saints who followed him were to have a monarchy on earth; that the wicked would be destroyed; that infants ought not to be baptized; that immersion was the only mode of baptism, &c., &c.

In 1641, the *Irish rebellion* broke out: the massacre of the Protestants, and civil war in England, completed the consternation of the people, and shot up a new crop of fanatics in that realm.

In 1645, the *Seekers* arose. They taught, like the Mormons, that the Scriptures were mutilated and defective; that the true church, its ministry, and ordinances, were lost; that the present ministry was without authority, and that miracles are in all ages indispensable to faith. They were subject to prophetic impulses, and ran through towns and villages, declaiming and prophesying against ordinary modes of worship. Females performed a distinguished part in these excesses. One of them went into Whitehall Chapel in time of service, and in presence of Cromwell, in a state of nudity, having been moved by the Spirit, as she said, to appear as a sign unto the people.

Soon after, in 1653, the MUGGLETONIANS appeared, headed by one Muggleton, a journeyman tailor, and an ignorant man by the name of Reeves. They gave out that they were the two last witnesses spoken of in Revelations. They denounced the "ministry of the churches as a lie and an abomination unto the Lord," declared that they were great prophets, had power to work miracles, absolve sins, &c., &c.

The terrible persecutions which attended the revocation of the edict of Nantes, in 1685, were accompanied with another shoal of fanaticisms on the continent of Europe.

Three years after, in 1688, the *Camisards*, or French prophets, appeared. In Dauphiny and Vivarais, in France, five or six hundred of both sexes gave out that they were prophets, inspired of the Holy Ghost. Their number soon increased to thousands, and though of all ages and sexes, they were mostly boys and girls from fifteen to twenty-five years of age. They had strange fits of trembling, fainting, and swooning. They fell on their backs, shut their eyes, saw heaven opened, the angels, paradise, and hell. They dropped down thus, not only in popular assemblies among thousands, but also in the fields alone they fell, and made the hills resound again with their cries for mercy, imprecations on the prevailing sects, and predictions of the near approach of the day of millenium glory. Then, New Jerusalem, the marriage of the Lamb, the reign of the Messiah, and acceptable year of the Lord, was of course to be ushered in by a deluge of judgments:—sword, fire, famines, earthquakes, plagues, and wars, were all piously reserved for the benefit of their enemies; while the one faith, one baptism, one Lord, and one eternal reign of Mormon glory, was to be their own peculiar inheritance. They pretended not only to the gift of prophecy, but also to the gift of tongues, of miracles, and of healing, of discerning spirits and the secrets of the heart, and to the Mormon power of conferring all these by the laying on of hands. They were brought to the fullest conviction of the reality and truth of all their pretensions, by the internal voice of the Spirit of God, communicating delight and holy joy to the soul, and pouring forth upon them a wonderful fervor of assurance and spirit of prayer. All they said was heard with the utmost reverence and awe. They spread like wildfire, not only on the continent of Europe, but in England. They there gave out that one of their teachers, who had died, would come to life again: fortunately he did not appear, though the multitude kept on believing.

In 1685, the *Tremblers* of Cevennes appeared, and were soon followed by the *Convulsionaries* of St. Menard, both of which sects will be noticed in another place, for a different purpose from the one now on hand.

In 1686, Sir Walter Scott informs us that the good people of Lanark, in Scotland, saw showers of spiritual swords, guns, hats, bonnets, caps, &c., fall for days in succession.

About this same period, also, *Sabbatai Levi* appeared in the east, and the Quietists in France and Spain, already alluded to. Valentine Greatrakes, who appeared in Ireland, and Emanuel Swedenborg, of Sweden, were also among the progeny of this wonderful period of combined persecution, credulity, and delusion.

Swedenborg, a son of the bishop of Gothnia, was born in Stockholm, Sweden, in 1688. He was a man of genius, enthusiasm, and extensive learning, and ultimately founded the New Jerusalem Church, which bears his name. His *hegira* occurred in 1743. At that time, also, the Lord manifested himself to him, as he imagined, by personal appearance, and opened his spiritual eyes, as he had done the eyes of thousands, both before and since. He, however, was peculiarly favored, for he was enabled to see and converse with spirits, uninterruptedly, for more than twenty-seven years. Thousands, in all parts of christendom, have believed in the revelations which he published. He maintained that all others might enjoy this same gift of second sight, if they would live in accordance with what he called the laws of their spiritual nature, as doubtless many of them might, and indeed all who could first *get* a *spiritual* nature, like his own. Multitudes of day dreamers, in as many various churches, might attest the truth of this. Unlike most other enthusiasts, however, he was probably sincere in his delusion; and, whatever may be said of the whimsical absurdity of his conceits, his writings, doctrines, and life, were neither vulgar nor immoral, as is the case with most other marvel-dealers. He was probably a learned, pious, devout monomaniac; a little more eccentric, though scarcely more absurd, or insane, than thousands of others whom the world call wise and devout.

The famous witchcraft phrensy, which exploded in Salem, New England, in 1692, belongs to this same period. Previous to this time, all classes believed in witchcraft, both in this country and in Europe. It was deemed the highest impiety to doubt it, and supposed witches were treated as capital offenders throughout christendom. Divines, statesmen, jurists, physicians, philosophers, and scholars, were all alike swept into this vortex of fanatical delusion, the combined offspring of that infernal spiritual despotism and contemptible credulity, which had for ages crushed and enfeebled the human race. So direful was this mania, that when the British parliament repealed the laws for the execution of witches, in 1735, Scotchmen, of the kirk, confessed and deplored that act of benevolence and humanity as among the annual category of their national sins. In New England, the learned and pious Cotton Mather, by a mistaken zeal, harangued and inflamed the already exorbitant credulity of his hearers. He taught them that they were, one and all, attended by an escort of devils, at home or abroad, awake or asleep, from whose malignant power they could not escape; and, to cap the climax of absurdity, he declared that the detestable proceedings of the court at Salem, he thought, had shed marvellous light upon the Word of God!! Of course, these devils soon furnished the people with business. Not only decrepid old men, and helpless women and children, but even dogs were solemnly adjudged and executed, for the imaginary crime of witchcraft. This example is not quoted as an instance of religious fanaticism, properly speaking, but rather to show that there is no end to human credulity, when guided by a popular and fanatical corps of spiritual instructors. Some have imagined that the devil was indeed let loose, in a peculiar manner, at this period. No doubt he was; but it was to befool fanatics and courts, not to bewitch dogs. Doubtless, also, the impending horror of Indian wars, and the general consternation of the times, both aided the credulity of the age and prospered the devil in his work.*

In 1728, soon after the rebellion in Scotland, *John Glass* arose in that country, founded the sect of Glassites, and taught, among other dogmas, the Mormon doctrines of weekly administration of the Lord's supper, washing each other's feet, literal interpretation of the Scriptures, and community of goods, so far as needed for the poor and the service of the church.

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* See Upham's Witchcraft, pages 256. 268.

Another general crop of fanatical sects sprung up, in Great Britain and America, after the great revivals of Whitfield, Wesley, Edwards, and others, and which seem, in some measure, to have clustered around the American and French revolutions. In this class come the Jumpers of Wales, already mentioned, and Jemima Wilkinson, Ann Lee, Mrs. Buchan, of Scotland, and Joanna Southcote, of England.

In 1776, Ann Lee, daughter of a blacksmith in Manchester, England, commenced her operations near Albany, New York. She was subject to peculiar spasms and convulsions, as many other impostors have been. In these fits, she would clench her hands until the blood oozed through the pores of her skin. She sometimes continued in them until her flesh and strength all wasted away, and she was fed and nursed like an infant. She had supernatural visions and revelations. Like the wife of Smith, she pretended that she was the elect lady, and also that she was the woman spoken of in Revelations; that she and Christ were the two first pillars of the church, and that no blessing could descend to any person but through her. She declared that she was the mother of all the elect, and travailed in childbirth for the whole world; that she could converse with the dead, and speak seventy-two different languages; that she should never die, but ascend to heaven in the twinkling of an eye. She did die, however; but her death was so far from opening the eyes of her dupes, that it rather confirmed them in the faith, and she still numbers about five thousand followers in the United States.

Like the Mormons, they believe that they are the only true church on earth, that they shall reign with Christ a thousand years, that they have all the apostolic gifts, and like them, they prove all their doctrines from prophecy, as well as by signs and wonders.

In the same year, 1776, Jemima Wilkinson, the daughter of a Quaker, of Cumberland, Rhode Island, gave out that she had been taken sick, and had actually died, and that her soul went to heaven, and continued there. She heard the inquiry in heaven: "Who will go and preach to a dying world?" She answered, "Here am I, send me." Her body was then re-animated by the spirit of Christ, upon which she set up as a public teacher, to give the last call of mercy to the human race. She declared that she had arrived to a state of perfection, and knew all things by immediate revelation; that she could foretell future events, heal all diseases, and discern the secrets of the heart. And, if any person was not healed by her, she attributed it, as the Mormons do, to the want of faith. She assumed the title of universal friend; declared that she had left the realms of glory for the good of mankind, and that all who would not believe in her should be damned. Her first visions occurred during her pretended illness and death, when twenty-four years of age, in 1775. After this, she enjoyed them at her leisure. She pretended that she should live a thousand years, and then be translated, without death. She preached in defence of a community of goods, and took, herself, whatever "the Lord had need of." Multitudes of the poor, and many of the rich, believed on her in New England, and made large contributions to her. Some gave hundreds, and one even a thousand dollars for her use. Several wealthy families were ruined by her. Neither theft, nor attempted murder, nor the hypocrisy of failing to walk on water, and of attempting to raise a living man to life, placed in a coffin for that purpose, in all which she was fully detected, could undeceive her followers. In spite of her pretended immortality, she died in 1819. Her followers would not believe in her death, even when they saw her corpse. They refused to bury her body, but, at last, were compelled to dispose of it, in some way, in secret. Those most interested in the game, by the double magic of either loss or gain, pretended that she had only left them for a time, to return again, and that her spirit would still be the guardian angel of all her followers, who of course kept on believing.*

In 1783, a Mrs. Buchan, in Glasgow, pretended that she also was the woman spoken of in Revelations; that the end of the world was near, and that all who believed on her should be taken up to heaven without tasting death. Her own death, however, in this case did somewhat stagger the faith of her followers.

In 1792, Joanna Southcote, a servant maid of Exeter, England, assumed the character of a prophetess, and pretended that she was the woman of the wilderness, and could give the seal of eternal life to her followers. Like Smith & Co., she uttered dreadful prophetic denunciations upon her opposers and the unbelieving nations, and predicted the speedy approach of her millenium. Of course her thousands of followers found all her predictions fulfilled. In the last year of her life she secluded herself from the world, and especially from the society of the other sex, and gave out that she was with child of the Holy Ghost, and that she should give birth to the Shiloh promised to Jacob before the end of the harvest, which would be the second coming of Christ. Harvest, however, came and went, but no Shiloh appeared. She died on the 27th of the following December. Her disciples refused to bury her. They waited four days for her resurrection and the birth of the Shiloh, until she began to rot. They then consented, with much reluctance, to a post-mortem examination, which fully refuted their belief. Her disciples then, with still greater reluctance, buried her body, but not their faith either in her or the promised Shiloh. On the contrary, they continue to flatter themselves that she will yet, in some way, reappear, and that with her will come their long expected Shiloh, and their Mormon gathering and millenium of Mormon glory.

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* Millenial Harbinger, vol. II., page 278.

In this same year, 1792, Richard Brothers published a book of prophecies and visions, and an account of his daily intercourse with God, in London. Among his followers was a member of the British parliament, a profound scholar, and one of the most learned men of his time. He made a speech in the house of commons declaring his full belief in one of the greatest absurdities ever presented to the British populace.

In the crop of religious fanatics we must also mention the Illuminati, or French atheists, whose particular fanaticism, owing to the peculiarity of the age and country in which they lived, took the form of extreme and puerile credulity in unbelief. That is, they refused to admit and believe the religion of truth and reason which God has given to the world, and set themselves to work, as all other fanatics have done, to make a better one for themselves and their race. Other fanatics have disbelieved and denounced what they called the absurdities of a particular faith, and advanced and pretended to believe still greater absurdities of their own. The infidel fanatics of France, on the contrary, denounced the absurdity, or what they deemed such, of all faith, and advanced an absurdity of their own which implies and demands a greater stretch of human credulity than the combined sense and nonsense of all other creeds. Men may prattle about unbelief, but, after all, they believe *something*, and that something which infidels and skeptics do actually believe, be it more or less, will be found, on examination, to be more absurd than the combined dogmas of all other fanatics. *Atheism is necessarily the greatest of all credulity.* It is the same perversion of a man's religious nature which constitutes the basis of all other fanaticisms. Disbelief of what is rational, is real or pretended belief in what is absurd. The greatest fanaticism of any age is the fanaticism of the atheist. Probably most of the impostors of other names have themselves been at heart atheists, or at least skeptics.

Other fanaticisms are more or less selfish and malignant. The fanaticism of atheism is, inherently, all selfishness and all malice. Other fanatics attempt to relieve a portion of mankind of their instinctive fear of a final retribution, by inculcating the belief of some particular absurdity. The fanatical atheist attempts to relieve at once the whole human race from the same salutary fear by inculcating belief in dogmas which render the globe a riddle, and man the greatest of all absurdities in and of himself. To relieve their followers from fear, other fanatics sometimes reason absurdly; but the atheist does the business at once by making all reason, and the universe itself, a riddle and an absurdity.

In France, however, they compromised the matter somewhat, at last, and after proclaiming that there was no God, no virtue, no crime, no heaven, and no hell, they established the worship of the goddess of reason, to satisfy the unquenchable instincts of the human soul, instead of the worship of Joanna Southcote, or Jemima Wilkinson, or Joe Smith, as other fanatics have done. The result of this experiment, and the number of their dupes in this country and Europe, are too well known to need further comment here.

These are all the religious fanaticisms of note which clustered around the political revolutions of the last part of the past century, unless we include the fanaticism of what is called the Kentucky revival, in the year 1800, which will be adverted to in another place.

After these tumults had subsided, the world again had some rest, until about the year 1830, when another crop of fanaticisms seems, from some cause, to have been produced, particularly in the United States.

In this shoal we find Miss Campbell, of Scotland, Irving and Mad Thom, of England, Dilks, of Ohio, Davidson and Mrs. Thompson, of Vermont, Matthias and Joe Smith, of New-York.

Miss Campbell appeared, in good old Scotland, about the year 1828. She pretended that she had come back from the dead, and had the gift of tongues. Several ministers of the church of Scotland are said to have believed on her, as well as some distinguished members of the bar. The mad rhapsodies of Irving are too well known to need further notice. The particular history of Mad Thom is not at hand; that of Matthias has recently appeared in most of the journals of the day. Like him, Dilks, the impostor of Ohio, pretended to be Almighty God himself. Davidson, his disciple, appeared in the vicinity of Bakersfield, in Vermont, in 1829. He pretended that Jesus Christ was a woman, and inferior to Dilks, who was God himself. A female, by the name of Thompson, accordingly appeared as Jesus Christ, the son of Dilks. The millenium was to take place in 1832. Dilks and his followers were to assemble at Philadelphia, as their Mount Zion, where they were to reign forever, while the rest of mankind were to be swept from the earth. They made preparations, as Jemima Wilkinson had done before them, to raise the dead; but the woman selected for the purpose got tired of lying in the coffin, and came forth of her own accord, before they were ready to pray her into life. They got about thirty disciples in the vicinity of Bakersfield, where they assembled on the Sabbath, and rolled naked on the floor, men and women together, as part of their worship, and committed other sins too revolting to mention. Still they found plenty of followers.*

Another fanatic appeared in Connecticut, about the year 1833, who pretended that he was Jesus Christ, and, in a public meeting in ———, professed to show the prints of the nails of his crucifixion in his hands. The people, finding that he was working upon the credulity of the simple, wrongfully imprinted more needful and obvious marks upon his back, and he suddenly disappeared, as Davidson and his followers did on the application of the tar and feathers in Vermont. We must protest, however, against these things, even in the most extreme cases. *Instruct the people, and not abuse fanatics.* That is the only way to kill fanaticism and rid the world of impostors.

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* See Burlington Sentinel, June, 1831, and Millenial Harbinger, Vol. II., page 357.

The history of Smith, who marches triumphantly in front of this last escort of fanatics, has been already given.

I have been thus tedious and particular in giving a brief summary of all the recorded fanaticisms of these later times, because a simple statement of facts will tend to wither up that lamentable credulity of the human mind, which lies at once at the foundation both of all fanaticism and all infidelity, more effectually than all the logic and argument in the universe.

"Let but the people know these things," and they would act with more enchanting power upon their minds than the will of Cæsar could upon the Romans.

The people generally have homilies, doctrines, and dogmas enough ever at hand; but they are starved for want of facts. The well-informed, because they themselves know all these and similar facts, are too apt to take it for granted that everybody else knows them too; and that some bare allusion to them will awaken the same ideas in other minds which it does in their own. This is a great mistake, and one which we have endeavored to remedy, not for the benefit of those who have been tolerably instructed in matters of faith, but for the good of the ignorant and uninformed. Others may pass this tedious and disgusting detail, or read and pardon it, as they choose.

In view of these facts, however, some few remarks will perhaps be useful to all: at least, they will conduce more directly to the specific end in view.

1. During the dark ages, amid the total dereliction of all reason in matters of faith, and the consequent persecutions, massacres, famines, and plagues that at once ravaged and terrified the globe, the prime causes of the most eccentric human credulity and fanaticisms, *ignorance* and *terror*, were ever present and ever active.

By examining the dates, it will be perceived that the most hideous fanaticisms, since that period, have all either clustered about similar epochs of general terror, or have followed, as a sort of after-clap, some more dignified, if not more rational, outbreak of religious enthusiasm.

1. The first was the German crop, of about the year 1530, which attended the agitation and turmoil of the Reformation. It embraces the various adherents of the Anabaptists and the followers of David George.

2. Next came the English crop of Quakers, Seekers, Muggletonians, &c., about 1650, in the days of the English Revolution.

3. Then came the great French crop, during the terrible persecutions that attended the revocation of the edict of Nantes, and the horrid hangings, starvings, smokings, drownings, and roastings of that infernal era, including the French Prophets, the Quietists, and Tremblers of Cevennes, followed by the Convulsionaries of St. Menard.

4. The English-American crop, escorted by the French infidels, appeared at the close of the last century, during the French and American revolutions, and immediately after the great revivals in this coun-

try and in England. It embraces the Jumpers, in Wales, the Buchanites of Scotland, and the followers of Ann Lee, Jemima Wilkinson, and Joanna Southcote, and, if you please, the Kentucky Revivalists.

The crop on hand, viz., Miss Campbell, Mr. Irving, Mad Thom, Mrs. Thompson, Dilks, Matthias, Joe Smith, Abner Kneeland, Fanny Wright, &c., were produced neither by famine, war, nor terror, but by folly. It would seem, in this case, as if all antecedent causes were reversed, and that now, in an age of profound peace and universal ease and plenty, men turned maniacs, and ran after fools from sheer ennui, because they had nothing else to do.

The Illuminati of France and Spain, and Antoinette Bourignon, appeared immediately after the Massacre of St. Bartholomews, in 1572.

Sabbatai Levi appeared in 1666, immediately after the terrible massacre of the Jews in Persia.

The Glassites, in Scotland, arose soon after the Scotch rebellion in 1715. The Salem witchcraft followed the terrors of a dreadful Indian war and other calamities.

These are the most noted instances of human credulity, in respect to religion, since the revival of letters, except Emanuel Swedenborg, and a few similar cases, which stand either sacred or sui generis. I have merely located these events; others may philosophize upon them as they choose. So will I. It is sufficient for my present purpose to remark, what must be apparent to all, that both persecution and terror, of all sorts, tend to increase the general credulity and fanaticism of mankind. Where these are wanting, an enthusiastic, semi-rational, and sectarian Christianity will answer a good purpose.

If such facts do not demonstrate that mankind will believe any thing in religion, however absurd and preposterous, provided it *be* absurd, and at the same time promise salvation as the reward of faith, it is difficult to say what would prove it. The truth is, Mormonism is no anomaly in our world; it only conforms to the general rule. We ought not to think it strange that thousands are ready to lay down their lives in defence of its absurdities. It would be more strange if an equal number should be found equally ready to profess and adhere to the simple, uncorrupted, unostentatious, rational, and tranquillizing doctrines of Christ and his apostles. Amid the utter discord of these professedly inspired opinions, it is interesting to notice that there are certain points of resemblance in which they generally agree.

1. They are all perfectly sure that their dogmas, and those of their own teachers, are true, for they have the witness of the Spirit to their truth in their own souls. And the more ridiculous and profligate their schemes of faith or practice, the brighter and clearer the internal gleamings of this mystic evidence become.

2. They all, however debauched, pretend to great sanctity, declaim against the degeneracy of the times, and pretend to be commissioned of God for the reformation of the church and the world.

3. They of course proclaim that the day of millenium glory is near at hand, and already commenced in their own clan; and most of them have talked of reigning on earth, with Christ, a thousand years.

4. They profess a literal interpretation of so much

scripture as is needful to their several schemes; but whether the rest is interpreted at all, or annihilated, they seem not to care.

5. They claim the gifts of tongues, of prophecy, healing, miracles, &c.

6. They all profess peculiar intimacy of intercourse and communion with God. Most of their leaders have been content to be regarded only as the virtual vicegerents of God on earth: others, with equal success and credit, have affected to be Gods themselves.

Now whether we call any or all of these impostors, knaves, or simple madmen, it matters little, so far as our present object is concerned, which is to exhibit and demonstrate human credulity. One fact still remains; they, as well as Joe Smith, all obtained followers, even the lowest and the meanest of them. We might suppose that their followers also were lunatics, unlike the rest of their kind; but a single glance at the history of the Pagan, Mohammedan, Catholic, and Protestant world, where things equally absurd, if not equally eccentric, meet us on all hands, must convince us that if these are maniacs, it is only because they belong to a race of religious madmen who have more industriously and systematically prosecuted the regular trade in credulity and delusion, while these have only wrought by fitful experiments in the hours of pastime. Their madness only appears singular and eccentric when compared with the more prevailing, settled, and popular phrensy of their fellows.

We except neither pretended philosophers, nor atheists, nor skeptics from this general rule of religious lunacy, but only those, whoever they are, and in whatever sect, who have sincerely and honestly applied their minds and submitted their hearts to a simple, practical, common sense interpretation of the word of God—the only cure of religious insanity the world has ever seen.

We have accounted for the credulity and insanity of all others by attributing it primarily to the perverse action of the *desire of power* in the few, and *aversion to restraint* in the many, upon the constitutionally religious nature of man, or upon the "*instinct of faith.*"

Some choose to designate this same tendency to perverse belief by the general name of human depravity. Others stoutly deny that human nature is depraved as regards religion; very philosophically, no doubt, as all the above facts show. However, they, as well as other philosophical maniacs, can find fools enough to believe them; each of whom is "wiser than ten men who can render a reason," at least in his own eyes.

There is, however, another subordinate principle of great power which is made to play into the hands of these more active agents in the great game of credulity and delusion. It is an innate *love of excitement* of any kind, but especially of that excitement which is produced, in the minds of individuals and communities, by whatever is new, strange, mysterious, or marvellous. Personal agitation will do; but popular uproar is far better. A marvellous and mystical church dogma, with its attendant ranting eulogies, is tolerable; but a stump speech, a good tragedy, a horse-race, or a mob, is first rate.

A single fact will illustrate the action of this principle.

In the year 1749, the facetious Duke of Montague, speaking of this innate love of exciting marvels, offered a wager that a large audience could be assembled at the new theatre in London, to see a man jump into a quart bottle. His proffer was accepted; he accordingly advertised "that on the following Monday, a gentleman would appear in the theatre, in the Hay Market, who would perform the most surprising feats. First, he would take a common walking-stick from any of the spectators, and thereon play the music of any instrument now in use; then he would take a common wine-bottle, place it on the table, leap in at the cork-hole, and there sing and play as before, while any gentlemen might handle the bottle at his leisure to ascertain that he was actually in it." Other wonders were added, as for example, "the conjurer would bring to life and present any deceased friend upon the stage, whom any gentleman or lady might wish to see or hear from," &c. &c.

On the other hand, the opponent of the duke, in order to defeat the hoax, put up a supplement to the advertisement, in which it was stated that another gentleman, "no taller than a tobacco pipe, would, on the same evening, among other wonders, transform his body into ten thousand different shapes, and finally open his mouth and jump down his own throat."

It was all in vain; human credulity prevailed, and the duke got his wager. A prodigious throng assembled. The house was crowded with dukes, duchesses, lords and ladies, of all degrees and ranks; they waited for the performance until they grew impatient; an uproar ensued—some shouting, some beating with their canes, others hurling the candles about the house, until finally the greater part made off as well as they could, losing hats, wigs, cloaks, and swords as they went; while others staid to demolish the theatre within; carrying all the furniture out into the street, they made a bonfire of it, and only ceased from their work of destruction on the arrival of the superior force of the city guards.*

Here is a principle at work which has ruled the multitude in all ages to an incredible extent. Men will believe any thing or do any thing, which promises them excitement, if not deterred by fear.

In the country, a discourse, based on simple reason and truth, from the wisest and best man in the nation, on the most important of all concerns, would not draw out a dozen of these marvel-hunting lovers of excitement. But a horse-race, or a bear-dance, or a stump speech from any hypocritical demagogue in the land, would bring out thousands of them. Reason with them in church on the duty and necessity of their forsaking their sins, and honestly attempting to live in accordance with the laws of their nature and their God, as the only possible condition of safety, either here or hereafter, *and how they yawn!* Tell them that they can be saved by falling into some wonderful and inexplicable ecstacy, or by believing some mystic absurdity, or by submitting to some external ceremony, or performing some senseless mummery, and they are all awake. The first doctrine is obvious and onerous; the others are marvellous and transient; and you have only to blow away at it hard, and keep it well shrouded in mystery, and well inflated with passion, and there will be an old shouting of "GLORY" and "AMEN FOR EVER!!!"

Proclaim in the city a public thanksgiving to Almighty God, and you will not gather a basket-full of this fashionable rabble of ingrates. But proclaim that a new ape or an old debauchee, will play King Lear, or Jack

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* See Sketches of Odd Characters, page 124.

Falstaff, or that a new prostitute will sing, or dance, or climb a rope, and all the *peculiarly rational* and *respectable* part of the community will be there—unless they chance to hear that a man is going to jump into a quart bottle somewhere else—and then of course they will be there.

Such being the order of things, it is no wonder that enthusiasts, fanatics, and impostors, find both hearers and believers, provided they can muster absurdities enough to draw them together, accompanied with a good supply of promises to save them, and threats to damn them if they wont believe. The only thing needful in order to make proselytes to any monstrous absurdity, which proffers salvation without the pain and trouble of a thorough moral reformation, is to tell your lie, *and stick to it, at all hazards, through thick and thin.* It matters not if it contradicts not one, but all the five human senses. Proclaim that the sun shines at midnight, and the stars at noonday, and maintain that all will be saved, or at least annihilated, if they will believe, *and stick to it,* and they will believe—you will find followers. As soon as you get enough together to work on popular sympathy, get up before them, and if you are not prepared to go the whole length in fanaticism, and proclaim Deism or Atheism at once, take the Bible along with you: the devil is compelled to work chiefly by the aid of the Bible in these days; its truths are so obviously obligatory, that he must quote scripture, except among the very lowest grade of religious maniacs. Never fear then, the more the Bible contradicts you, the more readily you will be believed. Only take care not to quote too much in the same connection; but snatch a text here, another there, now from Ezekiel, now from the Evangelists, now from the Apostles, now from the Apocalypse; jumble them all up together, and though every text you quote is directly against you, still bellow away, and assert the contrary—tell them they will be damned if they dont believe you, and stick to it, and you will find enough to believe. Oh!—they will say—see how he quotes scripture! The Bible is all at his tongue's end!! His argument is all scripture!! Strange this wicked and perverse generation will not believe!!

This simple rule would be of incalculable benefit to the ambitious reformer, or the pliant catspaw of any petty sect; and the more absurd their dogmas the better. Jesus Christ could scarce find a dozen followers in our world, and even these at last forsook him and fled. Joe Smith could find a hundred thousand to "fight to the death" for him, in any province in christendom.

If it is asked—What then is our reliance for the final dominion of truth over error? we answer, because error is strong only in tumult, truth only in repose. The one mounts like a rocket, only to fall like a stick: the other rises slowly and imperceptibly indeed in the world, but steadily and surely, as the ascent of the sun. The few, with the one, are and must be, in the long-run, stronger than the many with the other. And when Christianity can once be rendered rational, as it really is, without being made soulless, its hold and its sway, over minds of all orders and tendencies, will be at once strengthened and confirmed. But ere that day arrives, it seems destined, by the perverse ingenuity of man, to pass through all imaginable corruptions, and contend against all possible sophisms. This last great battle of eternity cannot, in the nature of things, be fought by a single arm or a single age. It is pleasant to reflect that even the absurdities of Mormonism are in many ways, though unwittingly, hastening on this great day of the final triumph of truth. Even here, it may be noticed with gratitude, that the Lord is bringing good out of evil.

CHAPTER IV.

GROUNDS OF THE CREDIBILITY OF A DIVINE REVELATION.

Grounds of caution—Charter of freedom—Basis of false schemes of faith—1. Force—2. Sympathy—3. Fanatical experience—4. Human testimony—God's judgment of—Value of testimony—Puerility of skeptics—True grounds of religious belief—Existence of the Deity—Personal experience—Inherent truth of Christianity—Objections, interpolations, &c.—Proofs from inevitable inference—God's mode of furnishing the facts—Man's mode of explaining them—Origin of the Bible—Authority of the Bible—Laws of nature—Moral necessity of miracles—Hume's sophism—Examples of facts to be explained—Conclusion.

It was our object, in the last chapter, to exhibit the fact, and some of the principal causes of the extreme credulity of mankind in matters of faith. We will now endeavor to derive some further practical inferences from these phenomena, which will lead us to consider the grounds on which a professed revelation from heaven can be made rationally credible to mankind.

I. *And, first, I remark that the facts adduced in the last chapter warn us to scrutinize all such professed revelations with extreme distrust, caution, and care.* We cannot believe, if we would, one in a million of those who have had the impudence to challenge the faith of our race. This fact, by itself, shows, if we were to reason only from the *general nature and tendency of the human mind to believe in such revelations*, that some such revelation of the will of God is at once *probable*, *necessary*, and *natural*, in a moral sense, because the race have been so constituted by their Maker, as universally to expect it. By analogy, this appetency, as well as all others, would necessarily demand its appropriate object, somewhere, in some age or country. The basis of this universal credulity is the peculiar nature which God has given man for wise and holy ends. That nature leads him to expect a genuine revelation from his Maker, through his fellow-man, in some way. But, perverted, it leads him to believe in the counterfeits instead of the true; which counterfeits, in and of themselves, imply a true, genuine original, somewhere, as necessarily as counterfeit coins imply the previous existence of their genuine originals.

Reasoning, however, from the ACTUAL EXPERIENCE of mankind, as regards the claims of any particular new revelations, professing to come from God, they are, in any age or country, in the highest degree improbable and absurd. If their claims were true, they would be a sort of miracles, which no other being but Almighty God could render, in the least degree, credible. The chain of evidence, on which alone we are authorized to suspend our faith, in any professed revelation, must be seen to hang from the eternal throne, and each successive link, as it drops through coming ages, must be attached, secured, and held only by the same omnipotent hand. The polluting touch of either men or angels, at once dissevers the dishonored link, in what part of the chain soever it is placed, and from that point the chain falls. We know that God is not wont to converse with mortals as a man converses with his fellow-man; and among the millions who have pretended to such converse, from motives of pride, ambition, or power, or impelled by insanity, we have found them UNIFORMLY LIARS. Men speak the truth generally, in other matters, and can be believed, but in religion experience has proved the WHOLE RACE, AS SUCH, *a race of* LIARS. They can neither be believed in part, nor in whole, on the ground of their own veracity. The greatest miracle, apparent in the New Testament, consists in the fact that God has enabled us to demonstrate, independently of all direct human testimony, that the evangelists and apostles, and authors of the Scriptures, SPOKE THE TRUTH, while the rest of their race, in similar circumstances, have UNIFORMLY LIED. New versions of an old and accredited scheme of faith would fall under the same rule. Whether a man comes forward, therefore, with either a new scheme of faith, or a new version of an old scheme, the rational presumption is that he is either a lunatic or an impostor. He must demonstrate that he is not, before we can believe him, however plausible his scheme. To hold him rigorously and unsparingly to this, is a duty we owe at once to ourselves, and to the human race.

As human beings, we have each and all an inalienable and inborn right to do, to say, or to think whatever we please, unless good and unanswerable reasons can be shown, in particular instances, why we should refrain.

Our powers of action, bodily and mental, are, in and of themselves, the great *charter* of our entire freedom, signed, sealed, and delivered to each one of us, by the omnipotent God himself, in that hour when he formed our bodies, and breathed into us our eternal souls. And no being in heaven, earth, or hell, has any right to abstract the smallest item from this innate freedom, but God himself—God, speaking to us, in some way, through that reason and conscience which he has implanted within us. God, who alone gave, alone may take away. If man becomes the agent, he must demonstrate his authority from God; otherwise, it is our duty to resist it even unto death. But to seize hold of the religious elements of man's nature, and wield them for the ends of pride and power, is the surest of all ways to trample millions in the dust, and reach all earthly emoluments at a single grasp. The man who holds the religious confidence of any community, holds them all: and we need not trace, to the world of despair, the terrible consequences of the hypocrisy and perfidy of false guides in faith, whether professed enthusiasts or atheists, in order to startle our confidence, check our credulity, and throw us back upon our reason and our rights. There is enough in both the past and present history of the world to do it, and do it effectively, if we have any claim to either reason or common sense. The man who allows himself either to believe or to disbelieve, in matters of such vast concern TO ALL, without the most demonstrable proofs, is at once a traitor to himself, to his race, and to his God, and deserves the contempt and execration of mankind.

II. *Let us then, notice some of the grounds upon which false schemes of faith have been received and passed from man to man.*

They are, in general, four:—1. Force, or military power; 2. Sympathy; 3. Fanatical experience; 4. Human testimony.

1. The first ground of faith, we notice, is *force*, or *civil*, or *military* authority.

The world has seen many great logicians, but, after all, there is nothing that will reason like a well-disciplined army. Men are wont to listen to truth when it comes from the cannon's mouth. The sword carves out a path of argumentation for itself, and the halter silences all objections. In this way, Mohammed, the Popes, and many others, have convinced half the human race.

2. The next false ground of belief is *sympathy*, or a tendency to believe, because others do, without knowing why or wherefore. I mention this, not as peculiar to false faiths, but as a false ground of belief common to all faiths alike.

It is self-evident that nothing can be more childish, and more truly contemptible, than either to believe or disbelieve any religious system, merely because our associates, or those around us do. Still, it is probable that Christianity itself is frequently received, at least nominally, and almost uniformly rejected, on this ground, and on this ground alone. It is the mere force of moral sympathy which gives such ridiculous power to the social authority, or mere "dictum" of congenial tempers, whether writers or speakers, either for or against the truths of Christianity. The stripling wight and the hoary debauchee, read a few passages from Paine, or Voltaire, or Gibbon, or Hume, or Fanny Wright, and they swallow down all they read, because these skeptics say so, and because it chimes in with their own moral sympathies. The valorous sticklers for orthodoxy, among twenty belligerent sects, each read the "dictums" of their favorite Joe Smiths, and believe them for precisely the same reason. They chime in with the ruling spirit of their day-dreams of sectarian supremacy.

If we cannot receive and interpret the Scriptures on better grounds than these, we had better pack off to Nauvoo. We belong there, at any rate, whether professed believers or skeptics. Let all those, of whatever name, who, from the mere impulse of social sympathy—*the "esprit du corps"*—put their own little clan above the human race, and the several generals of their host above even Jesus Christ himself, look well to the Mormons. There are striking resemblances between this sect and their own; and between their own leaders and the general at Nauvoo. Man-worship is not confined to the Mormons.

3. The next ground of belief we noticed is *fanatical* experience, or immediate personal revelation of the truth from God himself. God speaks to the soul of the devotee, and openly declares, or obscurely intimates, or at least obviously confirms, the truth of his opinions.

Now, whatever God says, must of course be true; and the only thing is, to be sure that it is the God of truth who speaks, and not our own vain, conceited imaginations; or our vagrant, wild, and frantic impulses. There are several things to be observed here.

1. The first is, that all good thoughts, and all good things, come, either directly or indirectly, from God, the author of all good.

2. All truth, and especially all religious truth, tends undoubtedly, when known and received, to render the mind calm, tranquil, peaceful, and happy, and to harmonize the action of all its powers. Truth was made for the mind, and the mind for truth. Pure religious truth, indeed, gives, from its own nature, a peace which the world of error knows not of.

3. Those persons who talk most of these fanatical assurances and rhapsodies of faith, are in temperament, and generally in temper, directly the reverse of all this. Enthusiastic in their habits, impetuous in their temper, vehement in their desires, and impatient of ne-

cessary ignorance, they at once affect all knowledge, and imagine for themselves all truth. This is, in reality, arrogance. But by making God, directly, their teacher, they contrive to call it humility.

Such a man may be, indeed, conscious of his thoughts and impressions, but he cannot be conscious of their origin. Whether they proceed from God, man, or the devil, mere consciousness cannot inform him. If he knows beforehand that his thoughts are true and good, he knows they are from the Fountain of all Good, either directly or indirectly, and should be thankful for them. Otherwise he has no ground for such belief, no more than the sot has proof that the reveries of his delirium are from the direct inspiration of God.

If his opinions and thoughts merely serve to awaken grateful and turbulent, or what he calls sweet and holy emotions in his soul, any opinion firmly believed to be true and acceptable to God would do the same, however false and absurd it might be. Probably no one will ever surpass Simeon the Stylite of old, or hundreds of Mormons in these days, in what they call the holy comforts of these devout raptures. But is there no way by which God assures us of the truth? Yes; when we search for it in accordance with his will, and the laws of our own minds. God made man to find the truth, as he does his natural food, by searching for it abroad, and not by feeling after it in his own stomach. And if he sets himself to seek for it in this way, he will soon, like the dyspeptic, learn to imagine that a thousand things suit his nature, which God made only for pigs and reptiles. God has taught us his truth by his works, his providence, and his word; and if human arrogance cannot be satisfied with this, it had better remain unsatisfied. At least it is probable that it will, at any rate. And yet all fanatics and all enthusiasts, of all ages, make common cause here. However diverse in all else, as we have seen, here they agree. They all know that their own, or the absurd schemes of their leaders, are true, either because God has personally revealed it to them, by some mystic voice, or by kindling up some holy rapture or ferment in their souls. In this common den of inspiration, we find monsters of all shapes and sizes, from Simeon the Stylite to Mad Thom.

In these rhapsodies of faith, or rather of folly, every silly figment of a diseased imagination is deemed either a voice or an impulse from God; and the more absurd the better, provided it chance to chime harmoniously with the ruling impulses or prevailing delirium of the hour. It is impossible to reason against this folly, for it defies all reason in the outset. The overweaning self-conceit, and the total paralysis of all the powers of reason, which such a morbid state of mind both engenders and implies, render all hopeless and all useless, while the spell is on, save handcuffs and the madhouse.

4. The fourth false ground of religious belief is mere *human testimony*, or the naked "dictum" of some one or more of our fellow-men.

This subject merits a careful consideration. We have already proved, by reasoning from past experience, that, however worthy of belief the human race may be in all else, in matters of faith they have, as a race, proved themselves liars, and utterly unworthy of all credit.

We shall see, now, that the exceptions only serve to confirm the rule, God himself being witness.

The facts are as follows. Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Saviour of men, came on earth and fulfilled all the leading prophecies of the Jews, before their own eyes. They and the world had long and anxiously awaited his appearance. They were eye-witnesses to the immaculate purity of his life. They listened to all the "gracious words that came out of his mouth." He lived, spake, and acted as never did man before.

If now, in any case, it could be reasonable to require men to believe on the mere testimony of *any thing in human form*, was it not reasonable to demand that they should take Christ at his word?

Would not even the Deist admit, that his testimony, in such a case, and under such circumstances, was far more credible than the combined testimony of the whole human race together? And yet, what does he say? John, x. 37: "If I do not the works of my Father, (referring to his miracles,) believe me NOT." "If I testify of myself, my testimony is NOT TRUE," (that is, not credible.) Again, John, xv. 24: "If I had not done among them the WORKS which none other man did, they had not had sin," (that is, they would have been under no obligation to believe.) Acts, ii. 22: "Jesus, approved [accredited] of God by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him."

If, then, the eternal God of all reason and truth deemed it necessary to accredit even his own Son, the foretold and long-expected Messiah, by miracles and wonders, and signs from heaven above and earth beneath, before requiring even the Jews to believe on him; and if Jesus himself commanded them not take his word—not to believe on him—without these vouchers of his veracity, what a comment is this on the utter incredibility of the human race in matters of faith, God and Christ themselves being judges? And have they suffered this momentous revelation of divine truth, after all this agony of effort to plant its credibility on higher ground, to fall back on mere depraved human testimony? If so, it is again on the level with all other books. We cannot receive it, as from God, on that ground alone. And has this same God, who deemed it unreasonable to ask men to take his Son at his word, merely because found in human form, really commanded them to believe the bare dictum of Joe Smith, on pain of eternal damnation!!!

At all events, God, who knew beforehand the history of man, has, in these and in numerous other passages of scripture, practically estimated human testimony in religion, and human opinion, at precisely what they are worth. He has dealt with men as a race of liars, unworthy of the smallest credit in faith, merely because they are so.

But though God has in fact thus decided that mere human testimony is no PROOF of the divine origin of any scheme of faith, he has not decided that human testimony is of no USE in transmitting a genuine scheme of faith. Neither shall we; and here we will make some distinctions indicative of that utility.

1. We should distinguish carefully between believing IN human testimony and believing ON ACCOUNT OF human testimony. We believe IN the testimony of one or more of any number of notorious liars when we are compelled, from knowledge derived from other sources, to admit that that testimony is true, and that one out of a multitude of knaves has thus unexpectedly been proved a man of truth. But we do not believe ON AC-

COUNT OF such testimony. Just so we believe IN the testimony of the evangelists; but we do not believe their statements ON ACCOUNT OF their testimony, or any other human testimony whatever. It is indeed true, that many sensible and eloquent men have maintained that our belief in Christianity is based on the testimony of the evangelists and others, and have proceeded to argue its truth professedly on that ground alone. They set themselves, however, at once to showing from FACTS, that the testimony of these witnesses is and must be true, thus evincing that they themselves do not believe ON ACCOUNT OF their mere testimony, but only that they believe IN their testimony, when they find that Almighty God, by his providence and his prophecies, has placed their testimony beyond the possibility of reasonable doubt. This is indeed believing IN, but not ON ACCOUNT OF human testimony.

2. We should distinguish between the testimony of *interested* and *disinterested* witnesses.

It is a maxim both of common law and of common sense, that the testimony of all interested witnesses should be rejected in evidence, whatever their previous character for veracity. Jesus Christ, as we have seen, did not exempt himself from the rule. Nor will he exempt any of his followers, or attempt to transmit a revelation on such grounds as to require their exemption, either in whole or in part. On this ground the testimony of the avowed enemies or the indifferent spectators of any new scheme of faith may be taken for what it is worth, more or less, but the mere uncorroborated testimony of any one or all of its partisans and friends, touching any fundamental point of its credibility, we set down for nothing. It is good for nothing.

Aside from the general corruption and incredibility of the race, in which we must presume that they participate, until the contrary is shown, *they are interested witnesses*, not to the amount of a few dollars only, but to the amount of all they have on earth and in heaven, if they are sincere. If there were no other proofs of Christ's mission and miracles than the bare narrations of his followers, nobody but a lunatic could believe one word of it.

We should distinguish between direct and incidental testimony, both in friends and foes.

When there is an evident design either to confirm or to overthrow a new faith, by the testimony given, that fact in itself diminishes its credibility, even when the witness is in other respects unexceptionable. Incidental testimony which springs up spontaneously, and evidently without any such design, is of far more value.

In any matter of miracle or faith the direct testimony of friends to its credibility is of no avail whatever, unless corroborated and sustained by other known and admitted facts. The incidental testimony of friends is less exceptionable, while the incidental testimony of enemies, of credible capacity, is of more value still. But no array of such mere testimony could render any revelation or miracle credible, from age to age, without the constant and efficient interposition of the sustaining and corroborating evidence of Divine Providence. Hence the burden of proof must rest, from age to age, on God, as well as begin with him. This proof Christianity alone is enabled to exhibit.

With these distinctions in view, then, we do not deny that the direct, positive testimony of friends may be of *great use* in a new and credible scheme of faith; but we do deny that such testimony, however much or little, can ever make any professedly new revelation from God in the least degree credible. And the more desperate the attempt to multiply converts and witnesses on such ground, the more utterly incredible it becomes; for it only more clearly betrays the artifice and uneasiness of its detestable and hypocritical authors and founders. There is not a competent court in christendom that would consent to arbitrate five dollars on any such ground. For, aside from the fact that the temptations are so great, that men in all ages and climes have been wont to lie about new revelations, there is no subject on which the majority of men are so easily duped as on this same all-important and awfully solemn subject of religion. And when a man's love of the marvellous is once thoroughly excited, the religious elements of his nature utterly crazed and distracted by new hopes, new alarms, new prodigies, and new phantasms, it is impossible to say what he may not see, and hear, and feel, and bear witness to. The honest, or at least the undesigning aberrations of the human mind in such circumstances, surpass all credulity and defy all philosophy; and it is absolutely certain that the all-wise and omnipotent God never could have resorted to the contemptible expedient of suspending the eternal salvation of a depraved race on the bare testimony of their confederates in guilt. Nor would he attempt to prop up the rotten credibility of one selfish and depraved human being by the naked testimony of others notoriously just as depraved. If Christianity be indeed a revelation from the true God of the universe, such a miserable expedient on the very face of it would destroy its credibility. And if Christianity is not credible, surely there is not, and cannot be, any other revelation which is; for its credibility was never staked for a single moment on mere human testimony, but it has been sustained from age to age, throughout the entire history of the world, by the direct, obvious, and signal interposition of God at every step; and if these signs all fail, no other *conceivable*, if any possible, signs can avail. At any rate the world must be in its dotage indeed, before it can accept any lower proof; and it ought to be consigned to a madhouse if it demands higher.

But how shall a man render his professed revelations credible? He cannot do it. It is impossible. He must, if honest, throw that responsibility back upon God, who alone can sustain it. And if a pretended prophet evinces any reluctance to do this, and attempts to prop himself upon mere human testimony, it is demonstrable proof that he is a knave; for if the whole human race should combine, to a man, aided by all bad angels, they could not render a professed revelation from God in the least degree credible. God the omnipotent, the all-wise, and all-controlling, alone can do that work.

How ineffably silly, then, to compare that revelation which God has made with any other which ever was or ever can be made! Deists often speak of distrusting human testimony, as a ground of religious belief. They are right. It is a thousand-fold more unworthy of confidence than even they have ever claimed it to be; and if they would be as careful in distrusting the vile originators of their fanatical doubts, as they are of distrusting St. Paul, or John, there would be both sense and consistency in their pretensions. As it is, they are usually the greatest of all dupes. The great names found in their ranks no more shelter them from this charge, than they do other fanatics, who can plead the same exemption on the same ground. Coincident insanity in faith and skill in science are common in all factions, all parties, all sects, and all ages. The insanity of the skeptic is none the more rational, because more common: his dupes are none the less dupes, because they are the dupes of an unbeliever, so called.

Notwithstanding these very obvious considerations, all forms, both of false religion and of professed irreligion, have in reality rested their claims to credibility on this rotten foundation of human testimony, or authority. Christianity is the only exception the world has ever seen; and much that is called Christian is as rank fanaticism, as are paganism, Mohammedanism, or infidelity.

It will be observed, that the question before us is not what use children, or idiots, or ignorant persons, or others necessitated to submit to authority, are to make of human testimony; but what use a man of mature years, who pretends to be governed by his reason, ought to make of it. If others may be compelled to lean on him, surely he ought not to lean on a cobweb or a rush. The strong must rest on reason and legitimate evidence, before even the weak can repose with safety on authority. The firm and unyielding bones and sinews of the father can alone bear and sustain the relaxed weakness of the infant. So God ordains—blessed be his name! The palsied dotage of human credulity is unfit for even the nursery of faith. How unequal then to its battles, sieges, vicissitudes, and wars!

III. *Having thus briefly noticed some of the false* *grounds of faith, we will now consider the only true ground on which a professed revelation from God can be rendered worthy of the least credit.*

But before advancing to this topic, it is needful first to advert to the proofs of the existence of a Supreme Being; and to show that this does not rest, either in whole or in part, on mere human testimony, as many fanatical sects pretend.

The main proof of the existence of the Supreme Being is three-fold.

1. *The universal and instinctive conceptions and tendencies of the human race*, in all ages. No rational account can be given of the instinct of faith, of which we have spoken, without admitting the being of its prime object, GOD. Man is so made, that in all the appropriate circumstances of his being he *feels* that there is a God, and cannot help it, without perverting and degrading his nature.

2. *Inference from known facts.* We know that the universe around us exists. We KNOW also, equally well, that either it has in some past time *sprung forth from nothing*, or else it has *existed from all eternity* in a successive series of events, such as we now behold, or, that *some supreme intelligent being created it.*

The first supposition is on the face of it absurd; the second is contrary to all known facts—to the known history and progress of human beings, and human language, and to all known astronomical and geological facts. Every mountain and every clod demonstrates its falsehood; for eternity would have reduced all to the same dead and muddy level. The last supposition is therefore the only possible one: viz, *the universe began, and God began it.*

3. All things, within and around us, are governed by *laws*, which imply a *lawgiver!* They are also full of *design*, which necessarily implies a *designer*.

Infidels wrangle against these proofs; they talk large: let them talk. Fanatics also frequently reject it. They want to stake our belief in the being of a God solely on testimony, or *direct revelation*, because if their followers can be made to believe without a reason here, they will be better prepared to swallow down their dogmas on other points of pretended revelation, or interpretation of admitted revelations, on the ground of the mere dictum of their leaders. Moreover, by making every thing in religion depend both for its proof and importance on *positive instruction*, mummeries and ceremonies can more easily be placed on the same level with moral duties. This generally suits the design of those learned or artful knaves, who teach only that fools may believe.

The true grounds of the credibility of a revelation from God are in general two-fold.

1. PERSONAL EXPERIENCE, or individual certainty of its truth, derived from consciousness, observation, and experience.

2. NECESSARY AND INEVITABLE LOGICAL INFERENCE from facts which we know and admit; that such a revelation must have come from God as its author, because all other suppositions involve in themselves an absurdity, or a train of absurdities.

The personal experience to which I refer is not based, either in whole or in part, on any supernatural or fanatical light, or impulse, or any mystical or mysterious commotion or excitement of soul whatever; but on a calm, deliberate, and rigidly philosophical knowledge of the fact, that such a professed revelation agrees *with*, and is adapted *to*, all the known laws and necessities of both matter and mind: in short, to all the laws and exigencies of our being, and that it is therefore calculated to promote in the highest degree, not only our own individual well-being, but all the great social, civil, and religious interests of the human race; insomuch that none can attain either the highest excellence, or the greatest happiness of which human nature is capable, without a proper practical regard to its doctrines and laws.

This experience shows that such a revelation must have come, either directly or indirectly, from God, the author of all beneficence and truth.

Now the sole grand end of Christianity, from first to last, is to induce all men to strive to become, in moral temper and character, like its great archetype and founder, JESUS CHRIST. All else are merely the necessary means to that sole grand end.

But every man, of even tolerable common sense, who will throw aside his passions and prejudices, and subject himself *solely to his reason*, will immediately discover from his own personal observation and experience the following things.

1. Neither individuals nor communities can ever attain the highest excellence, or the greatest happiness, of which their nature and condition are capable, without an honest and thorough attempt to become such, in their moral character and feelings, as Jesus Christ was; and the nearer they approximate to this standard of moral purity, the greater will be their share of both social safety and personal bliss, and the further they depart from it, the greater the ruin that ensues, both to them and their fellows.

2. He will discover from his own personal experience that this moral purity and elevation of character cannot be obtained, even in any degree, without admitting all the fundamental doctrines, submitting himself to all the influences, and diligently employing all the means commended to his notice in the gospel. The more closely he follows and believes the truths therein contained, the greater his success in attaining this moral purity and its attendant blessings ; while the more he disregards these truths, the more signal will be his failure, and the more corrupt and miserable his career.

In order to come to this conclusion, he needs to do but three things.

1. Consider what Christianity, even with all its corruptions and abominable perversions, has effected, and is at this moment effecting, for christendom, as compared with the rest of the world.

2. Consider what sort of a community that would be, in which all its members were in moral temper and character just like Jesus Christ.

3. Consider what changes must be made in himself, before he can become such ; what means are requisite, and what the amount of obligation resting upon him, as well as on all others.

We hope it will be understood here that we are referring the inquirer to no sect, no creed, and no exposition of Christianity, either ancient or modern, but to the New Testament itself, as it is ; and should he honestly attempt to live in obedience to pure reason, and in strict accordance with the laws of that moral nature which God has given him, he will find, from individual experience, two things more :

1. He will be compelled to make honest and unre-

mitting efforts to become, in moral temper and character, like Jesus Christ, the only perfect model of humanity.

2. He will find himself under an equal necessity to take the New Testament for his guide.

Such facts prove that Christianity is true, WHETHER FROM GOD OR NOT; and secondly, reason alone teaches that such important truth must have come, either directly or indirectly, from God; and also, that any scheme of religion which cannot endure these tests is false, and cannot be from God.

The first grand question, as regards the New Testament, is not a question respecting either its origin or authorship; but it is a question which pertains, fundamentally, to that and all other books, viz—Is IT TRUE? Are its fundamental doctrines and precepts true doctrines and useful precepts? *Does the book contain and develop the great fundamental laws and principles of the moral and social well-being of the human race, or does it not?* If so, whatever of truth it does contain is binding on the conscience of the human race, come from what source or through what hands it may, because IT IS TRUTH.

Now we might safely permit the sectarian, the dogmatist, and the deist, each and all, to take their shears, and cut from the Bible every text which has been either doubted, or disputed, or slandered, or ridiculed; and when they had, one and all, cut away until they were satisfied, we might take the remaining texts, more or less, together with such others as the *simple light of reason*, in this age of the world, would compel them to restore and admit as true; and if we should throw them at random, thus mutilated and tattered, without order or arrangement, among any barbarous race on earth, they would, if read, believed, and obeyed, exert a more energetic reforming influence upon their character and destiny, than all the other books the world has ever seen, which have neither drank nor stolen from this same fountain: for they would still contain more important moral truth, adapted to the nature and necessities of man, than all other books, not emanating from the same original source. But how is it with the Koran, the Book of Mormon, and the moral speculations of deists and skeptics? Only take away what their authors have manifestly stolen from the Bible, and there is nothing of moral truth remaining; their moral power is annihilated, and they become vain speculations or baseless fancies.

This single broad view of the subject renders the difference between the Bible and all pretended revelations sufficiently apparent, and the ordinary objections, sophisms, and cavils of skeptics, sufficiently frivolous and contemptible? Suppose that it could be demonstrated that half of the Bible was really made up of human interpolations, errors, contradictions, and absurdities, what then? Would that alter the truth of the other half? No: for it might still be shown, that, in that other half, there was more renovating, soul-reforming, moral truth, demonstrable to reason, and indispensable to man, than in all the other books in the world which have neither stolen nor borrowed from its light. If we sincerely want the *religion of nature* then, we must, after all, take it from the Bible, whatever may have been its origin, because there, and there alone, is found the religion of nature—a religion *adapted to human nature* as it actually is. Can any other book, either moral or religious, plead the same prerogative, on the same ground? If so, where is it? Show it to us, and we will at once believe it to be from God.

These and similar considerations, derived from our own individual consciousness, observation, and experience, assure us that the Bible is substantially true, and, like all other truth, from God, whether directly or not. We find its truths adapted to the laws and necessities of our own moral nature, and to the highest well-being of human nature as such.

In the books of impostors we find no such thing, except in the fragments or scattered thoughts evidently derived from the Bible.

2. We will now briefly advert to a very few of the sources from which a professed revelation from God may derive demonstrable proofs of its authority, by *necessary and by inevitable logical inference from known and admitted facts.*

By such inference, we intend no mere conjecture, no tame probabilities, but an absolute necessity, imposed upon us by the God of nature and of mind, himself, of inferring and believing one thing from seeing or admitting another, or else of giving up our claim to be considered rational beings. As, for example, when we see a smoke, we inevitably, if not insane, infer a fire; and when we see a temple or a ship, we infer the existence of architects, worship, water, winds, &c., because we know that one of these things could not exist without the others, as certainly as we know the existence of the things we behold.

This chain of logical inference, of course, embraces all those considerations which are usually treated of under the separate heads of miracle, prophecy, and providence. But, as it is not our present design to write a treatise on the evidences of revelation, we shall only indicate the general principles upon which this great law of inference proceeds, in determining the divine authority of a genuine revelation, and summarily illustrate it by citing a few from the multitude of examples which God has furnished to every age.

It is obvious that there are here two things to be considered. *First*—In what manner the Deity must proceed, in order to furnish the human race with facts from which they will be compelled to make the necessary inference. *Second*—In what manner man is to proceed, in making those inferences, in each successive age; and it will be found that man must begin where God ends. He must take nothing for granted which is not self-evident, and believe nothing until compelled to believe by the most rigorous principles of logic.

1. First, then, God must begin to furnish facts, as proof by miracle, or other supernatural means, as soon as, or rather before, belief is required; and these facts must, in the outset, be exhibited to all who are required to believe, *whether friends or foes*, just as the Egyptian miracles, in fact, were exhibited under Moses. It must not be done in secret, nor in a party, but with a "high hand and an outstretched arm," so that all may know, at once, that it is God, and not man.

2. Such a commencement renders all subsequent revelations and divine interpositions, obviously forming a part of the same grand scheme, credible on a far less amount of proof than would be required to authenticate them, if they stood disconnected, either really or apparently, from any such scheme. The natural and inevitable inference of the human mind, that God will

complete what he has begun, in itself furnishes a part of the necessary proof in all subsequent cases.

3. But these original events, themselves, would become utterly incredible, if left to stand on mere human testimony, however much or little. On the contrary, miracles, in the limited sense of that term, if continued from age to age, in all lands, would lose their power of impression, and thus annihilate their own force, aside from abstracting seriously and irreparably from the harmony of providence and well-being of man. They are a sort of moral volcanoes, which, if diffused too widely, must consume and annihilate our reason, instead of enlightening it. Hence, to relieve both of these difficulties, after a revelation has once been rendered credible and complete, by such signal interpositions of direct omnipotence, its credibility must be sustained, from age to age, by subsequent miracles, or by the exhibition of peculiar institutions, monuments, memorials, prophecies, and providences, which none but God could originate and control; and it must never be left to rest, for a single moment, on the mere uncorroborated testimony of man.

It is not needful to contend that this is the only way God could render a revelation credible to man, but only that this is *one way*, at once natural and rational, and that any mode whatever, less efficient, would be incredible; while it is believed that any other mode whatever will be found, in a moral sense, either unnatural or totally irrational; but these evidences, Christianity, and Christianity alone, is enabled to exhibit.

God commenced the great enterprise under Moses in Egypt in accordance with the first condition, and has prosecuted it down to our own age, by the continued exhibition of institutions, monuments, prophecies, and providences, obvious, impressive, multiform, and inexplicable on any other ground, except on the ground that the God of nature and providence is also the God of the Bible. This, then, is the mode which God has taken to furnish us with facts from which to make our inferences.

2. Our next inquiry is: In what manner are we to proceed in making rational inferences from these facts?

Our answer is, we are to begin from facts which we know and admit, and proceed, as in all other cases, from the known to the unknown. Throwing all direct human testimony entirely out of the question, as being in and of itself no rational ground of belief, either in miracles or revelations, we should take facts before our own eyes, and attempt rationally to account for them; and we shall find that Almighty God has bound the most trivial events of our own age and our own firesides to the original displays of his miraculous power on the banks of the Nile, and in the land of Judea, by a chain of evidence which no human power can break, and no human sophistry dissolve.

To trace all the links and branches of this mysterious chain is the work of ages and volumes; we can only give one or two examples. In giving these examples we shall make but two points of inquiry.

1. In what ages of the world did the several books of the Bible originate?

2. Is God responsible for their truth?

Now I hope it will be granted that every man of common sense knows that there is such a part of the world as christendom, in which he lives and acts, and that this said christendom has peculiar institutions, customs, laws, and manners which control his own destiny and the most ordinary occurrences of his life. But all these imply the previous existence and *belief* of the Bible. The Bible is the parent, and christendom is the offspring; and if the Bible were annihilated, he would be compelled either to make or *imagine* another, before he could explain the peculiar institutions and manners of his own country, or even the most common events of his life. The date of a deed, an almanac, a copper, or a letter, is a miracle, if Christ did not live eighteen hundred years ago; and all christendom is a miracle, if he did not, at some time, live and teach as the Bible says he did. So in any previous age, since the coming of Christ, the facts of the Bible have been admitted, its doctrines believed, its rites and ceremonies practised, its monuments reared, and its influences felt and exhibited in action by all christendom; and not to know this with absolute certainty by *direct and necessary inference* from facts before our own eyes, is either not to reason at all, or to reason like a maniac.

Again; every man of common intelligence knows that there is now scattered abroad over the face of the earth, a distinct and peculiar people called the Jews; having, in like manner, institutions, laws, and manners peculiar to themselves, and making both their past history and present condition, in and of themselves, moral miracles in every age of the world. Of all this the Old Testament is the parent, and Judaism, in all ages, is but the offspring. And to attempt to reason upon the actual condition of Jews and Christians, in any age of the world, and deny the *substantial historical truths* of the Bible, is as absurd as it would be to attempt to reason upon the present condition of Europe without admitting the substantial truth of feudal history, or on the present condition of the United States without admitting the history of the revolution, or the validity of the documents of the continental congress. The previous existence and *belief* of the Bible, substantially as we now have it, is as indispensable to the existence of Jews and Christians in the world as the Koran is to Mohammedans, or the Book of Mormon to the followers of Smith. To admit the existence of Jews and Christians, and deny that Moses and Christ lived and taught, as they have reported, is the same sort of absurdity, both in kind and degree, as to admit the existence of Mohammedans and Mormons, and still deny that Mohammed and Smith have lived and taught, as represented by them. Considering the peculiar age in which Christ lived, the extreme singularity of his character, and the overwhelming influence that character has in fact exerted on the destinies of the globe, as we now see it with our own eyes, if the world is not in possession of the substantial truth of both his character and doctrine, (setting aside all that is miraculous,) just as they are in possession of the substantial history and doctrines of Confucius, Socrates, Seneca, Bacon, Washington, and others, that fact in itself is a moral miracle, more incredible than all the natural miracles of the Bible, and all the legends of monks and of Mormons. But if his character and doctrines are thus known to the world, they are substantially in the New Testament, and nowhere else.

True, a character may be imagined. But a purely imaginary character could no more rule the globe than it could create one. It would be more rational to suppose that an imaginary phantom created the universe, than to suppose that the present condition of the human race resulted from any other influence than from that of such a character and being as Jesus Christ is represented to be in the New Testament, both living and teaching at the time and in the manner he is represented to have lived and taught. This point, it will be noticed, does not touch the truth of his doctrines, but only the great fact, that they were *promulgated* and *believed* at the time, and substantially in the manner reported. We are brought then inevitably to this point—Can we rationally account for the appearance of Smith, of Mohammed, and other impostors, and the success of their doctrines, without admitting the supernatural interposition of God? Doubtless we can, and therefore ought to do so. But can we rationally account for the appearance of Jesus Christ without such admission? We shall see. This will bring us upon the second point, viz:

2. *Has God made himself responsible for the substantial truth of Christianity, as we now have it in the Bible?*

We will content ourselves with the lowest possible view of the character of Christ, viz, the deist's own favorite notion, that he was a mere man, of matchless moral wisdom, benevolence, and purity. We will assume that there is a benevolent God in heaven who cares for the general well-being of man on earth. We will admit, if you please, that he neither foresaw, nor designed, nor planned for the appearance of Christ on earth; that the event took him by entire surprise, but still that he has sufficient capacity to estimate, with at least tolerable correctness, the true value of any given character to the world when it appears. The simple question, then, is this: Did even such a meager Divinity as we have described, permit such a character of matchless purity, wisdom, and benevolence to appear, and live, and die on earth, beneath the continual frowns of his providence, without any attestation of his divine complacence in his immaculate life and doctrines, and thus suffer him to sink among the general herd of our guilty race, and all the peculiar moral advantages of that character to be lost to mankind for ever? Or did he leave man to supply by fraud what he had omitted to grant from negligence? There can be but one more monstrous supposition, which is, that the God of heaven actually foresaw, and designed, and planned the appearance of Christ, who was himself peculiarly near and dear to him on the ground of his moral excellence, if on no other, and left him then to such a silent and ignominious life and death. Analogous cases cannot be found, for another similar character never appeared. And, considering the good which even a corrupted Christianity has wrought for man, and what we now know that a pure Christianity is adapted from its own nature to effect for human weal, such a supposition is in and of itself more absurd and incredible than that all the dead should have leaped from their graves, the stars from their thrones, and the ocean from its bed, in attestation of the divine complacency in such a character and doctrine; if there be indeed in heaven a God who cares for the well-being of man on earth.

But once admit that Christ was his Son, sent on purpose to instruct and reform the world, and the only possible supposition by which we could get rid of mircles, even if none were on record, would be too childish and contemptible even to reason against. To believe that God made Joe Smith's barges with a hole in the bottom, is in that case infinitely more rational than to believe that such a being as Jesus Christ appeared in such a world as ours, without supernatural evidences of the divine favor.

It is true, the laws of nature are usually held steady and uniform in their operation by the all-wise Creator. But for *what end?* For *whose benefit* has God decreed that these laws of nature shall be held thus uniform? Is it merely that he may sit and gaze in eternal wonder upon the ceaseless whirl of this vast machinery, as the child does upon his top? Or is it for the benefit of clods, and stones, and pigs? or for the good of moral beings like ourselves?

Precisely the same reason, then, which induces the Divine Being to hold the laws of nature steady and uniform, in all other cases, *should* impel him to interrupt them, whenever that same good of moral beings requires it; and to fail to do it would be to act not like a Deity, but like a dunce. And if such a crisis did not occur, on the appearance of Christ in our world, one can never occur, nor even be imagined.

The ordinary laws of the moral universe as much require the laws of physical nature to be interrupted at such a crisis, as they do that they should be held steady at all other times. At that crisis, therefore, there must have been either miracles in the natural world, or a still greater miracle in the moral world; that is, the natural and indispensable laws of the moral world must have been at once interrupted and outraged by the Creator himself, so far as we can see, or the natural laws of the physical world must have yielded to the necessity of the occasion. Possibly such an infamous negligence of the good of mankind, had it occurred, might have been concealed from our view; but it would have been none the less infamous and unworthy of the Deity. And even if the innate benevolent nature of that blessed Being who rules over all, could be imagined to allow him to sit in silent and listless negligence, in such a momentous era as that of the birth of Christ, a prudent regard to his honor among intelligent beings must have impelled him to action; and to act too just as the Scriptures assert that he did act. We need not talk here of the subsequent perversions of Christianity, which only make its deep and unutterable utility and necessity the more apparent. Nor is it of any use for the objector to tell us that the councils and conduct of the Creator are above the scrutiny of human reason; for, if so, he may work miracles as well as omit them, even when we can see no good reason for it.

But again, all the miracles of the Bible were expressly designed to concentrate around the person, character, and doctrines of Jesus Christ. They all point, like so many finger-boards, either backward or forward, to him, who alone is "the way, and the truth, and the life;" they were all designed either to prepare mankind for his appearance, or to complete and consummate his mission. The precise thing, therefore, which renders the miracles of the Scriptures credible, is the appearance and character of Jesus Christ. With him they are both natural and necessary, *without any human testimony.* Without him, or some similar character, they would have been incredible, *on any amount of mere human testimony whatever.* We believe, therefore, neither the doctrines nor the miracles of the Scriptures *on account* of human testimony, though we believe IN human testimony, when we have first rescued that testimony from the disregard which it merits, on the ground of its being human testimony to matters of faith. Whatever human testimony God has not enabled, and *in reason compelled* us, thus to rescue from the general rule of infamy, deserves only our utter disregard, be it much or little.

Hume's puerile sophism on miracles, amended so as to accord with reason and common sense, would stand thus: "All experience shows that God, for the good of man, holds the laws of physical nature steady and uniform, except when the same good of man and the higher laws of moral nature requires that they should be interrupted; and then he uniformly interrupts them." The appearance of Christ produced one such moral crisis in our world, and the appearance of any other similar being would undoubtedly, by the same uniform moral law, produce another similar exhibition. In all other connections, and in all other cases, miracles are utterly incredible on any amount of human testimony whatever. True, the Mormons and other fanatics hang around the Bible, just as vermin suck their vigor from the most noble forms; but that does not make them an organic part of such bodies. A *profound* philosopher should be able to distinguish between them. This is, however, what most skeptics profess themselves unable to achieve. We would gladly put them in possession of the means of this necessary discrimination.

Thus far, our cause stands precisely thus. Reasoning from known and admitted facts—facts with which God has purposely filled the world—we must imagine millions of moral miracles and absurdities, in order to get rid of admitting that Christ appeared, lived, and taught, in substance as recorded in the New Testament. But if we admit the appearance of such a character, and such doctrines of morality in connection with such a life and death, we should be compelled to imagine supernatural interpositions of the Divine Being in their favor, even if we found none on record, or else to deny that there was a God in heaven who cared for the well-being of man; or we must admit that he lacked the power thus to interpose, for the proof of his veracity to the minds of men. Deists and skeptics may take their choice; or they may confound all creeds together, paganism, Mormonism, and all, and then prate about one religion's being just as good and just as susceptible of proof as another: that will not make it so. Yet these are only some of the considerations which show that deism implies, in itself, the most absurd and childish credulity.

Again: human nature is so averse to the principles and restraints of the gospel, that it is only with the utmost difficulty that only a few individuals, comparatively, are found, who can be persuaded honestly to adopt and practise its doctrines, even after convinced of their general truth; and that, too, in an age when there is nothing to forbid, but much to impel to such a course. After centuries of effort, it has been found impracticable to force the doctrines of Christ upon any except the most enlightened and benevolent nations and individuals. (I am here speaking of the real doctrines of Christ, not of the dogmas of bigots and fanatics.) How did it happen, then, that such doctrines should have actually acquired the control of the intellect and destinies of the globe, amid a race naturally so averse to its restraints, if God has not interposed continually in its favor? If that interposition should now cease, all christendom would become infidels in less than a century. How, then, could *belief* of such obnoxious doctrines have originated, and advanced, as it has, without such interposition, when the power of the globe was against them?

If such interpositions as are reported did not occur, why did not the stubborn Jews, or the warlike Romans, or the philosophic Greeks contradict the report, especially when they saw that it not only implicated their own characters, but endangered their religion and their state?

Joe Smith arises and claims miraculous power, and though he exhibits nothing, makes war upon none, and endangers none directly, still he cannot live five years without setting all pens and all tongues in motion to expose and contradict the lie. Affidavits and books are accumulated by scores every year. Jesus Christ arises, declares direct and determined war upon all the institutions of the globe, civil, political, and religious, works miracles, is apprehended and put to death, by the most gigantic military despotism the world has ever seen. A few fishermen record his doctrines and miracles, give them to the world as true, and thus not only consign his persecutors to infamy, but openly charge them with his deliberate murder! *Not a pen moves! Not a tongue speaks! All is silent!* They are pricked to the heart! multitudes believe; and these uncontradicted tales now rule the world. Surely there was a different species of human beings on the globe then from what there is in these days.

Let us account for facts. That is all we have to do.

Again: the whole world of talent and genius have agonized, through ages of toil, to devise a system of morals and religion adapted to the nature of man, and consistent with all other known truth. The Egyptian labored; the Greek labored; the Roman labored; Socrates, the "wisest and best of men," Plato, the universal genius, Aristotle, the wonder of the world, Cicero, the prince of scholars and orators—all labored and toiled, and toiled again, and all *failed.* Their systems and their works are with them in the dust. Jesus Christ, an obscure, unlettered, and despised Galilean, touched the subject, and threw around it the light of eternal day, charming, by the unearthly music of his divine wisdom and virtue, the most distant and enlightened ages and nations. Was this of God, or of man? *We must account for facts.*

Again: all these, and multitudes of others, have toiled to gain an eternal sway over human opinion and action, in enlightened nations. For this end, they have ransacked the world of fiction and of fact, written volumes upon volumes, and all who have relied upon mere moral means have utterly failed. But this same despised outcast of Nazareth, without study, without education, and seemingly without design—without even writing a single scroll himself, has acquired, and still retains, an uncontrolled and undiminished sway over the faith, laws, manners, and customs of the only civilized nations on the globe. *Here is a fact.* God calls on us to account for it, as rational beings.

Again: the light of modern science has overthrown, and, if known, would inevitably sweep away all forms of false religion, as well as all perversions of Christianity, from off the face of the globe, and leave man, with all the instinctive longings of his religious nature, unsatisfied forever. On the contrary, in spite of the assaults of skeptics, each new science tends only to confirm and strengthen the truths of Christianity, insomuch that the great masters in every science, the Bacons, and Newtons, and Lockes, and Cuviers, of every age, have been almost without exception Christians of firm, if not of a devout faith. While the wisest and best of mankind, our Washingtons, and Hancocks, and Hales, and even our invincible Bonapartes, and our skeptical Franklins, declare that Christianity is still, even in this remote age, indispensable to the civil and social well-being of mankind. How, then, alone, of all other mere men, did Jesus Christ, or the twelve fishermen of Galilee, foresee the teachings of science, and anticipate the political and social necessities of remote ages and unborn nations two thousand years after his death?

Again: all who have made an honest, experimental application and trial of the moral truths of Christianity, aver that they find them in all respects to accord with the most secret consciousness of their souls, and adapted to all the laws and exigencies of their being. But how did Jesus Christ alone, of all others, know the hearts and moral necessities of men in remote and unborn ages?

Again: whenever or wherever, in all countries, and in all ages, the Bible has been opened, read, understood, believed, and practised, even in a tolerable degree, in any given community, there peace, order, tranquillity, plenty, and freedom have abounded; law and right rule; science shines; intelligence sparkles; hope brightens, and joy abounds. But wherever the Bible has been closed, or cast out, or corrupted, or despised, there ambition, intrigue, rancor, treason, anarchy, and war have stalked abroad; tyranny has there revelled, liberty departed, science faltered, industry slackened, plenty vanished; passion, lust, and crime have become rampant; hope has sickened, and joy fled forever. Let any village in christendom try the former experiment, and they will become a happy and prosperous village in six months from the hour they commence. Let them try the other, and sots and knaves will soon abound, but honest men will starve or fly.

Is the God of providence, then, the God of the Bible? and does he care for it, or does he not? He has given us some few facts to look at as well as "*testimonies*."

Again: how happens it that men have been able to add to, or take from, the pretended truths of other religions without individual or public harm, while every corruption of Christianity has uniformly resulted in the most terrific evils to the human race? The Greeks and Romans voted in gods and voted out gods, and all was just as well as before; while a few seemingly slight corruptions of Christianity filled all Europe with blood and terror, through mourning ages of darkness and dismay. Does the God of providence care for Christianity, or does he not care for it?

These are but a few of the manifold facts, which God has thrown across our track, in every age of the world, and by which he compels us to admit, that the God of nature and providence is also the God of the Bible, or else give up our claim to be deemed rational beings.

There are also the standing and peculiar monuments of the Jews and Christians, Circumcision, the Passover, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper; all running up, inevitably, to the same original idea, and more than all these, lucid and miraculous predictions of prophecy. Here our simple duty is to compare the present and past history of the globe with its prophetic history, given two thousand years ago, and make the necessary and inevitable inference from such a comparison.

Jews, Christians, Mohammedans, Judea, Egypt, Edom, Tyre, Ammon, Moab, Philistia, Nineveh, Babylon, &c., are all at this moment so many monuments, reared by Omnipotence, in face of the globe, in every age, to compel them to infer that the Bible is not of man, but of God. In short, God has in no age failed to keep the world, in all parts of it, filled with facts open to the eyes of all, which are utterly inexplicable on any other ground except on the obvious and simple position that the Bible is the word of God. Admit that, and all is plain. Deny that, and all is riddle, mystery, and miracle, from the stamping of a copper to the desolation of empires.

A full survey of all the absurdities which must ensue from denying that the Bible is the word of God, while attempting to account for facts before our own eyes, and in the world at large, would be necessary, in order to a full exhibition of the evidence of the divine authority of the Scriptures, from necessary and inevitable logical inference from known facts. This our design will not permit. Can any other book advance such claims? Yet so it is: when men undertake to make a new revelation, they construct about us a perfect hedge of riddles, from which we may indeed not easily make our escape. But when God undertakes it, he enstamps the proofs of its authority on all without and within us; so that without it, all else is but a riddle, a perfect maze of utterly inexplicable riddles. The same all-skilful hand that weaves the web of Providence and of Destiny, so interlocks the golden lines of his revealed will, that no mortal hand can sever the two without the simultaneous destruction of both.

Here we find evidence that is worth something; this looks indeed like Divinity. We want no human testimonies, and human probabilities, and human authorities, and human impulses, and human phantasms here. We have the great seal of high Heaven, enstamped, not merely on the record of the original facts, but on all we see, and hear, and know, and feel, in all ages of the world, and through every hour of our lives, from the cradle to the grave. The bank notes of heaven are not so easily counterfeited, after all, as many seem to imagine. It requires something more than somebody's mere "say so" to make them current. They must be traced with a pen which none but Omnipotence can wield: its eternal lines must run through all ages and encircle all the generations of men so plainly, that all may see for themselves, and that even he that runneth may read. How far forth Joseph Smith's pretended revelations can endure the scrutiny of these tests, we shall see in the subsequent chapters.

CHAPTER V.

CLAIMS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON TO CREDIBILITY AND AUTHORITY.

Its claims—Character of Smith—Contrasted with Moses—The sainted twelve of Smith—Testimony of Smith's three witnesses—Character of Harris by Smith—by his own wife—Character of Cowdery and Whitmer by Smith—by others—Capacity of witnesses—Eye of faith, power of God, &c.—Disinterestedness of witnesses—Testimony of the eight witnesses—Smith's mode of translation.

HAVING briefly considered the general grounds on which a revelation professing to come from God can be rendered credible, we are now prepared to examine the pretensions of Smith. The Book of Mormon claims to be the foundation of the whole scheme; and though this claim is unfounded, as we have shown, still we will first consider its credibility and authority.

By referring to the general account already given of the origin and history of this book, the reader will at once see that it does not even pretend to base its claims on either of the two grounds, on which a revelation can be rendered credible, viz, *on the personal experience and observation of the individuals whom it addresses*; nor, secondly, *on the ground of inevitable inference from known and admitted facts.*

So far as argument is concerned, we might here consign both the book and its author, without further remarks, to the infamy which, in common with all similar impostures, they really deserve.

But, since Smith's pretensions, not only to the character of a prophet, but also to that of an honest man, rest primarily on this book, we will, for the common benefit of the credulous and the curious, proceed to examine the only remaining claims which it ever has, or ever can set up. These are four:

1. Claims on the ground of the known character of its author, Joseph Smith.

2. Claims on the ground of the credibility of the witnesses who have endorsed it.

3. Claims on the ground of the Scripture prophecies.

4. Claims on the ground of its own internal excellence.

1. Our first point respects the character and credibility of Joseph Smith, jun., who announces himself, on the title-page of the first edition of the Book of Mormon, as "*the* AUTHOR *and* PROPRIETOR" of that work.

Our first remark is, that we cheerfully admit this claim.

We cannot conceive how any man of common sense could ever have imagined that God, or any other being, except Joe Smith, was either the author or proprietor of such a book. The only difficulty is, to see how God can be responsible for a work of which Joseph Smith is "*Author and Proprietor;*" and one ground on which such a claim must be sustained, is the admitted excellence and trustworthiness of Joseph Smith's moral character.

We admit that a man may have great faults, and still be not only worthy of credit, but an *accredited* and appropriate agent of the Most High.

All the ancient worthies, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, were frail and sinful men, like ourselves; still they became the approved and *accredited* messengers of God.

We admit, also, that God often chooses "the weak things of the world to confound the wise;" and that want of mere worldly talent, acquirement, or genius, is therefore no insuperable objection to the credibility of a prophet of the Lord.

Still, we contend that God never has, and never will, choose a character notoriously weak, silly, profane, and rotten in all its parts, to deliver a new dispensation of his will to man.

What, then, was the NOTORIOUS CHARACTER *of Joseph Smith* BEFORE, AND AT THE TIME, *of the writing of the Book of Mormon?*

After the union of Smith and Rigdon, as before related, it became apparent that Smith was about to gain credence and make mischief in communities where he was not known. The citizens of Palmyra and Manchester, where the Smiths formerly resided, then, for the first time, felt it to be their duty to make some effort to expose his real character, that the world might see it as it is.

A large number of the most respectable citizens, who had known Smith from a boy, appeared before the proper tribunals, and gave testimony, upon solemn oath, before God, of what they themselves personally knew of Smith and his family, touching their previous character and conduct.

These affidavits were at the time published in most of the leading journals of the day.

The number of persons, whose several testimonies have fallen into the hands of the author, is above ninety; mostly men of known character and respectability where they reside. Their affidavits and testimonies, if given at length, would occupy at least fifty pages of the present volume. To republish the whole would be useless. We shall therefore select a few, from among the most concise and explicit.

The first is signed by about fifty gentlemen in Palmyra, of the highest respectability, of almost all professions in life, and equally diverse in their religious sentiments. Lawyers, physicians, clergymen, civil magistrates, farmers, mechanics, Episcopalians, Quakers, Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, elders, deacons, &c., &c., all are represented upon the list of names. Here, surely, is no confederacy of interest.

Their testimony is as follows.

Palmyra, N. Y., Dec. 4, 1833.

"We, the undersigned, having been acquainted with the Smith family for a number of years, while they resided near this place, have no hesitation in saying, that we consider them destitute of that moral character which ought to entitle them to the confidence of any community. They were particularly famous for visionary projects, spent much of their time in digging for money, which they pretended was hid in the earth; and to this day large excavations may be seen in the earth, not far from their residence, where they used to spend their time in digging for hidden treasures. Joseph Smith, senior, and his son Joseph, were in particular considered *entirely destitute of moral character, and addicted to vicious habits. Martin Harris* had acquired a considerable property, and, in *matters of business*, his word was considered *good.* But on moral and religious subjects he was *perfectly visionary;* sometimes advocating one sentiment, sometimes another.

"In reference to all with whom we are acquainted, that have embraced Mormonism from this neighborhood, we are compelled to say that they were visionary; and most of them destitute of moral character, and without influence in the community. This is the reason why they were permitted to go on with their imposition undisturbed. It was not supposed that any of them were possessed of sufficient character or influence to make any one believe their book, or their sentiments; and we know not a single individual in this vicinity who puts the least confidence in their pretended revelations."

Signed,

Geo. N. Williams,
Clark Robinson,
Lemuel Durfee,
E. S. Townsend,
Henry P. Alger,
C. E. Thayer,
L. Williams,
Geo. W. Crosby,
Levi Thayer,
N. S. Williams,
Henry Jessup,
Joel Thayer,
Israel F. Chilson,
H. Linnell,
Jas. Jenner,
Josiah Rice,
S. Ackley,
Jesse Townsend,
Richard D. Clark,
Th. P. Baldwin,
John Sothington,
Thomas Rogers, 2d.,
Wm. Parke,
Josiah Francis,
Amos Holister,
G. A. Hathaway,
David G. Ely,
H. K. Gerome,
G. Beckwith,
Lewis Foster,
Hyram Payne,
P. Grandin,
Asahel Millard,
H. P. Thayer,
P. Sexton,
M. Butterfield,
S. P. Seymour,
D. S. Jackways,
John Hurlbut,
N. H. Beckwith,
Philo Durfee,
Giles S. Ely,

Durfey Chase,
Wells Anderson,
Linus North,
E. D. Robinson,
G. W. Anderson,
R. W. Smith,
Pelatiah West,
L. Hurd,
A. Ensworth.

A similar testimony was also given by the citizens of Manchester, N. Y., in the borders of which town, near Palmyra, the Smith family resided at the time of finding the "golden bible." It is as follows:

Manchester, Nov. 3d, 1833.

"We, the undersigned, being personally acquainted with the family of Joseph Smith, jun., with whom the celebrated 'gold bible' so called, originated, state: That they were not only a lazy, indolent set of men, but also intemperate, and their word was not to be depended upon, and we are truly glad to dispense with their society."

SIGNED,

Pardon Butts,
Warden A. Reed,
Hiram Smith,
Alfred Stafford,
James Gee,
Abel Chase,
A. H. Wentworth.
Moses C. Smith,
Joseph Fish,
Horace N. Barnes,
Sylvester Worden.

Parley Chase, of Manchester, also testifies that the Smiths were "lazy, intemperate, worthless men, very much addicted to lying, in which they frequently boasted their skill; and that Joseph, the prophet, bore the reputation of a liar, as all his former neighbors would testify."

David Stafford testifies on oath, before Frederick Smith, justice of the peace of Wayne county, N. Y., given at Manchester, Dec. 12th, 1833, to substantially the same facts, and adds that the whole family were not only liars, indolent, and intemperate, but that they were also suspected of gaining their livelihood in part by theft.

In the affidavit of Henry Harris, given before Jonathan Lapham, justice of the peace of Cuyahoga county, Ohio, among other things, he states that he was once on a jury before which the prophet, Smith, appeared as a witness, and that the jury could not, and did not, receive his testimony as true. Witness also deposes that, from long acquaintance with Smith, he could not himself believe him under oath.

Roswell Nichols also testifies among other things, that "for breach of contracts, for non-payment of debts and borrowed money, and for duplicity with their neighbors, the family were notorious."

Joseph Capron testifies that the whole family of Smiths were notorious for indolence, foolery, and falsehood. *Their whole object appeared to be to live without work.* While they were digging for money they were daily harassed by the demands of creditors which they were never able to pay."

Barton Stafford, on oath before Tho. P. Baldwin, judge of Wayne county court, testifies "that Joseph Smith, sen., was a noted drunkard, and that most of the family followed his example, especially the prophet, Joseph, jun., who was much addicted to intemperance. Even after he pretended to be inspired of the Lord to translate the Book of Mormon, he one day got quite drunk while at work in my father's field. Finding his legs refuse to do their office, he leaned upon the fence for some time. At length, recovering again, he fell to scuffling with one of the workmen, who tore his shirt nearly off from him. His wife (whom he had recently married, and who was at our house on a visit) appeared very much grieved at his conduct, and, to protect his back from the sun and conceal his nakedness, threw her shawl over his shoulders, and in that plight escorted the prophet home. When intoxicated he frequently made his religion the topic of conversation."

Willard Chase testifies, before Frederick Smith, justice of the peace of Wayne county, N. Y., that in 1826, when Smith wanted to go to Pennsylvania to see his intended wife, being destitute of means, he set his wits to work to raise the money, and get a recommendation to the fair one of his choice. He went to a man by the name of Lawrence, as Lawrence told witness himself, and pretended that he had discovered in Pennsylvania a very rich mine of silver, which could be readily loaded into boats, and taken to Philadelphia, down the river, to market.

By Smith's promising to go himself, and show him the spot, Lawrence was induced to believe and accompany him. He soon found that he had to advance all the money to foot the bills by the way. When they arrived at Mr. Hales', Smith got Lawrence to recommend him to Mr. Hales' daughter, Emma, whom he afterwards married, without her father's consent. They then went to hunt for the mine, but found nothing, and Lawrence was left to return and pay his own expenses back, as best he could. After securing a clandestine marriage with his wife, Smith desired to return to N. York, and take her and her effects with him. He accordingly went to an old Dutchman by the name of Stowel, with whom he had formerly dug for money, and told him that he had discovered on the bank of Black River, N. Y., a cave, in which he had found a bar of gold as big as his leg, and about three or four feet long; that he could not get it out alone, on account of its being fast at one end. But if he (Stowel) would go and move him up to Manchester, they would go with a chisel and mallet, and get it, and share the prize between them. Stowel went; and shortly after their arrival at Manchester he reminded the prophet of his promise; but he calmly replied that he would not go in search of the cave, for his wife was now among strangers, and would be very lonesome if he should go away. Like Lawrence, Stowel returned without seeing any gold, except what he paid out of his own pockets, to defray the expenses of himself and his valiant comrade.

These facts are quoted merely to show how Smith has acquired such skill at deception, as he obviously possesses among the ignorant. He has got it by practice. It has been his sole business from a child, as multitudes of facts show. In short, it was also the business of his father and of the whole family.

The testimony of Mr. Isaac Hale, of Harmony, Penn., the much abused and aggrieved father-in-law of Smith, whose daughter Emma he enticed from home and married, without her father's consent, has been recently before the public. It was given before Charles Dimmon, justice of the peace. William Thompson and David Dimock, associate judges of the court of common pleas in Susquehanna county, Penn., attest that Mr. Hale is a man of *excellent moral character, and of undoubted veracity.*

Mr. Hale, after stating a variety of facts as regards the appearance and translation of the Book of Mormon, his first acquaintance with Smith, his subsequent elopement with his daughter, and having from a sense of duty described the character of Smith to be much the same as that given him by all the other witnesses, thus concludes:

"Joseph Smith, Jr., resided near me, for some time after his marriage, and I had a good opportunity of becoming acquainted with him, and somewhat acquainted with his associates; and I conscientiously believe, from the facts I have detailed, and from many other circumstances which I do not deem it necessary to relate, that the whole Book of Mormon, so called, is a silly fabrication of falsehood and wickedness, got up for speculation, and with a design to dupe the credulous and unwary, and in order that its fabricators may *live upon the spoils* of those who swallow the deception."

The facts alluded to relate to the appearance, conduct, and conversation of Smith, Harris, and Cowdery, during the time they were engaged in pretending to translate the golden plates; which work, it appears, was commenced in Mr. Hale's house, and continued until he ordered the pretended plates out of doors, and then the work was prosecuted in that vicinity until it was finished.

We have given only brief extracts from the affidavits of a small part of the original witnesses. To swell our volume with a full rehearsal of all the tedious and disgusting detail of facts, which they adduce to prove and illustrate the consummate knavery of the prophet, and his family, would be indeed a thankless task.

The above will answer as specimens of the depositions of some hundred respectable witnesses, both as regards their opinion of the character of Smith, and the facts on which that opinion is founded. *No attempt has ever been made* by the Mormons to impeach the credibility of any of these witnesses, nor could such an attempt be made with success. They can declaim long and loud, and call all this persecution, and impiously compare it to the persecutions of Christ, whose moral excellence even deists have been compelled to admire; but they can bring no opposing facts from any source whatever. They can ASSERT that Smith's character was good, but they cannot find a man to admit it, who knew him, except those leagued with him in his detestable scheme of fraud.

So far, then, as the bare testimony of Smith is concerned, the case stands thus—We may either believe in the testimony of some ninety or a hundred individuals, of unimpeachable veracity, given under solemn oath, and all corroborating one another, or we may believe the absurd and contradictory statements of one interested, and notorious liar, respecting a matter before unheard of, and utterly incredible on any amount whatever of mere human testimony.

But, if the evidence of these witnesses is to be taken, either in whole or in part, what becomes of Smith and his pretended revelation?

Here is the singular phenomenon of a new revelation, claiming credence, fundamentally, on the ground of mere human testimony; but the moment we admit the credibility of human testimony, even on the ordinary rules of a civil court, both the book and its author are prostrated at once, and their character and credibility destroyed forever.

In one dispensation of faith, God chose Moses, a man skilled in all the wisdom of Egypt, not faultless, indeed, but at least respectable, even in the judgment of his enemies. In the second dispensation, he chose his own Son, in whom even the heathen Pilate could find no fault. Now, in a third dispensation, if Mormonism were of God, "the crowning glory" of the whole, as we are impudently told, would he have chosen Joe Smith, the money-digger? If so, he would not only have chosen a weak instrument, but the choice itself would have been preposterous, had he expected any man of common sense to believe on him. True, Moses, David, the prophets, and apostles, were all *faulty*, all weak and imperfect beings, like other men; but the character of Joe Smith is not merely *faulty*, it is utterly void and rotten; and so entirely unworthy, as to make it more credible that the whole human race should lie than that the all-wise and benevolent God should challenge the faith, and stake the eternal well-being of his dependent creatures on the labors of one so heartless and utterly unworthy of credit as Joe Smith is proved to have been from his youth up. Yet this "crowning dispensation of the fulness of the gospel" is impudently promulgated on the bare dictum of Joe Smith! It is compared to that gospel which came "with signs and wonders on earth beneath, and in heaven above," through him "who spake as never man spake"! But it is incredible that he, in whom Pilate could find no fault—he who once miraculously appropriated to his use the virtue, energy, courage, wisdom, and skill of a Paul to consummate his designs—it is incredible that he, in these last days, has made choice of an instrument so vile and disreputable. To suppose it possible would be to degrade the character of God, and bring reproach upon his cause. But it is not so. It awakens in our minds feelings of painful incongruity to admit such an absurdity, though it be only for the sake of argument.

Even Smith himself is conscious that he is worthy of no credit, as his conduct plainly shows. He well knew, from the beginning of his present movements, that nobody either would or could believe a word he should say. Hence he resorted to the despicable subterfuge of getting others equally infamous to testify and endorse his absurd pretensions.

According to Smith's account of this pretended revelation, God first sets one Mormon* to hide away the records of an extinct people, in the earth, lest he should forget their history, and he keeps them buried for fourteen hundred years. Then he commissions an angel to disclose the mighty treasure to a money-digger, and orders him to translate the record, as the words are revealed to him through two pellucid stones. In the midst of the process, the devil steals a part of the translation of this precious and indispensable history, preserved through centuries with so much care, and the Almighty, it would seem, could neither recall the events, nor again translate the plates, nor force the devil to give up the first, the stolen translation !† Finally, however, with much ado, after three years' toil to induce the Lord to instruct Joe Smith how to read in the stones, and in preparing Harris and Cowdery to write, the wonderful history comes forth to the world—all except that part which the devil stole—and Joe Smith, Jr., is of course ready to swear to its divine authority. But will the world believe him ? Doubtful. God, therefore, next commands him to get Martin Harris, his scribe, a fit tool for such an enterprise, to come forward and "*bear witness*." Then comes Oliver Cowdery, the other scribe, and he *testifies*. Then the whole family of Smiths, the old man and all, come on to the stand, and they *testify;* and, finally, the family of Whitmers, "*fit body to fit head*," bring up the rear to this valiant squadron of martyrs. And now, wonderful to tell! "Infandum O Regina"! here are the sainted twelve! counting the bellwether of this hopeful flock, (the present general at Nauvoo,) they amount to the precise number of the ancient apostles! Nothing more is wanted but to promulgate the lie and stick to it. They have done so, and found followers.

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* See B. M. p. 529. † See B. C. p. 168. 156; and B. M. pref. to the first edition.

But when or where did God ever before resort to the miserable expedient of attempting to prove the testimony of one depraved being by that of another just as depraved? What should we have thought of Paul, if he had got Peter, and John, and James, and others to *endorse* his epistles for him, certifying that they were true? Why that single fact would have been sufficient to have overthrown the entire credibility of the whole of them. We might still have said that the sentiments in them are true and good, but we never could have believed that a man, *conscious* of a commission from the Most High, could have resorted to such a contemptible expedient. Much less can we believe that God himself would authorize and countenance such a measure, as Smith pretends he did in this case.*

What! God, the omnipotent and the wise, with such a black and dismal scroll, as this world's religious history presents, distinctly before his view—God, who did not require us to take even his beloved Son at his word—would he challenge the confidence and faith of his creatures, in the concerns of the immortal soul, on the mere ground of the testimony of twelve depraved human beings? Satan himself would blush to do it, were it not that he is the father of lies, and the father of all such pretended revelations.

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* See B. C. page 171.

Again: it would be more rational to believe that the whole human race had perjured themselves, instead of a dozen indolent sots, than to believe such an absurdity as this is, on the very face of it, even admitting the witnesses to be the purest men on earth.

But we are willing, in this case, to waive all considerations of this sort, and admit that the story is not, on the face of it, absurd, and that a revelation could be made credible in this way, provided the witnesses were trustworthy. On this ground alone, then, let us examine the testimony of the *endorsers of the Mormon prophet.*

To render their testimony more imposing, these twelve witnesses are marshalled before us in squadrons. First comes the name of the valorous General, on the title-page, as "author and proprietor" of the marvel. Then, at a proper distance in the rear, quite on the last leaf, comes the platoon of three: Oliver Cowdery, as sergeant, leads the way; David Whitmer follows; and Martin Harris, as corporal, brings up the rear; all of whom have since abandoned the society! So it would seem that Smith's divinity was almost as unlucky in choosing his select platoon of witnesses, as he was in choosing his translator; or, rather, his "author and proprietor." Next comes the formidable battalion of eight, "who have seen, and *hefted*, and know of a surety." Of these, three, viz, Christian and Peter Whitmer, and Joseph Smith, sen., have since died, and all the rest, except the two Smiths, brothers of the prophet, have apostatized—at least, they have abandoned Joe Smith—viz, Jacob Whitmer, John Whitmer, and their brother-in-law, Hiram Page. This looks rather squally; but, however, there is nothing like faith; let us go on. And first, let us hear the apostate three, of the first squadron.*

THE TESTIMONY OF THREE WITNESSES.

"Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and peoples, unto whom this work shall come, that we, through the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, have seen the plates which contain this record, which is a record of the people of Nephi, and also of the Lamanites, his brethren, and also of the people of Jared, which came from the tower of which hath been spoken; and we also know that they have been translated by the *gift and power of God, for his voice hath declared it unto us.* Wherefore we know of a surety that the work is true.

"And we also testify that we have seen the engravings, which are upon the plates, and they have been shown unto us by the *power of God*, and not of man. And we declare, with words of soberness, that an angel of God came from heaven, and he brought and laid before our eyes that we beheld and saw the plates and the engravings thereon. And we know that it is by the grace of God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, that we beheld, and bear record that these things are true: and it is marvellous in our eyes. Nev-

* See B. M., p. 588.

ertheless, the *voice of the Lord commanded us* that we should bear record of it. Wherefore, to be obedient unto the commandments of God, we bear testimony to these things; and we know that if we are faithful in Christ we shall rid our garments of the blood of all men, and be found spotless before the judgment-seat of Christ, and shall dwell with him eternally in the heavens. And the honor be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is one God. Amen."

Signed,

OLIVER COWDERY.
DAVID WHITMER.
MARTIN HARRIS.

The reader is requested to notice particularly the words in Italics. One would indeed think, that if honest men had heard and seen such marvels, they ought, at least, themselves to have believed it through life, and lived accordingly, as the apostles did. But we will examine their credibility on other grounds than the fact of their apostacy.

The credibility of a witness depends on four things mainly: 1. His character. 2. His capacity. 3. His disinterestedness. 4. His explicitness. We will examine these several witnesses on these several points, in order.

1. And first, as regards the character of Martin Harris, we have the inspired testimony of Joseph Smith, the prophet.

In the Elders' Journal, published at "Far West,' Mo., August, 1838, and edited by the prophet himself, on the fifty-ninth page, the reader will find the following explicit and elegant testimony of the prophet to the character of Harris:

"Granny Parish had a few others who acted as lacqueys, such as *Martin Harris*, &c.——but they are so far beneath contempt, that a notice of them would be too great a sacrifice for a gentleman to make. While they were held under the restraints of the (Mormon) church, they *had to behave* with *some degree* of propriety. But no sooner were they excluded from the fellowship of the church, than they gave loose to *all kind of abominations*, swearing, lying, cheating, swindling, with every *species* of DEBAUCHERY."

So says the prophet himself; and in two respects this extract differs widely from his other inspired productions. It is both more *explicit* and more *credible*, on the face of it. The prophet seems here to be animated with something like a consciousness that he is, for once, telling the truth. We will not insult our readers, however, so much as to allow him to testify even against himself, without corroborating proof. The saints, doubtless, will believe him; but nobody else can, even when he speaks the truth.

We refer the reader, therefore, to the testimony of the citizens of Palmyra, given on page 152, who were well acquainted with all these eleven witnesses, as well as the three before us.

G. W. Stodard and Richard Ford also testify to the same facts with the other citizens, and add, that "Harris was quarrelsome, not only in the neighborhood, but in his family. He was known frequently to abuse his wife by whipping her, kicking her out of bed, and turning her out of doors, &c. He was first a Quaker, then a Universalist, then a Restorationer, then a Baptist, then a Presbyterian, and then a Mormon; but never commanded the respect of his neighbors."

His abused wife has also given her testimony. We will hear it at length.

Palmyra, Nov. 29, 1833.

"Being called upon to give a statement to the world of what I know concerning the Gold Bible speculation, and also of the conduct of Martin Harris, my husband, who is a leading character among the Mormons, I do it free from prejudice, realizing that I must give an account at the bar of God for what I say.

"Martin Harris was once industrious, attentive to his domestic concerns, and thought to be worth about ten thousand dollars. He is naturally quick in his temper, and, in his mad fits, frequently abuses all who may oppose him in his wishes. However strange it may seem, I have been a great sufferer by his unreasonable conduct. At different times, while I lived with him, he has whipped, kicked, and turned me out of the house. About a year previous to the report that Smith had found gold plates, he became very intimate in the Smith family, and said he believed Joseph could see in his stone any thing he wished. After this, he apparently became very sanguine in his belief, and frequently said he would have no one in his house that did not believe in Mormonism; and because I would not give credit to the report about the golden plates, he became more austere toward me. In one of his fits of rage, he struck me with the butt end of a whip, about the size of my thumb, and three or four feet long. He beat me on the head four or five times, and the next day turned me out of doors twice, and beat me in a shameful manner.

The next day I went to the town of Marion, and while there my flesh was black and blue in many places. His complaint against me was, that I was trying to hinder him from making money—that is, by the Mormon speculation.—When he found that I was going to Mr. Putnan's, in Marion, he said he was going too; that they had sent for him to pay them a visit. On my arrival at Mr. Putnan's, I asked if they had sent for Mr. Harris. They replied that they knew nothing about it. He, however, came in the evening. Mrs. Putnan told him never to strike or abuse me any more! He then denied ever striking me. She was, however, convinced that he lied, as the marks of his beating me were plain to be seen, for more than two weeks. Whether the Mormon religion be true or false, I leave the world to judge; for its effects on Mr. Harris have been to make him more cross, turbulent, and abusive to me. *His whole object was to make money by it.* I will give one proof of this. One day, at Peter Harris' house, I told him he had better leave the company of the Smiths, as their religion was false. To which he replied, '*If you would let me alone, I could make money by it.*' It is in vain for the Mormons to deny these facts, for they are all well known to most of his former neighbors. The man has now become rather an object of pity. He has spent most of his property, and lost the confidence of his former friends. If he had labored as hard on his farm as he has to make Mormons, he might now be one of the wealthiest farmers in the country. He now spends his time travelling through the country, spreading the Mormon delusion, and has no regard whatever to his family.

"With regard to Mr. Harris being intimate with

Mrs. Haggard, as has been reported, it is but justice to myself to state such facts as have come under my own observation, to show whether I had any grounds of jealousy or not. He was very intimate with this family for some time previous to their going to Ohio.

"They lived, for a while, in a house which he had built for their accommodation; and here he spent most of his leisure hours, and made her presents from the store and house. He carried these presents in a private manner; and frequently, when he went there, he would pretend to be going to some of the neighbors on an errand, or into the field. After getting out of sight of the house, he would steer straight for Haggard's house, especially if Mr. Haggard was from home. At times he would go when Haggard was from home, and would stay until twelve or one o'clock, and sometimes until daylight. If his intentions were evil, the Lord will judge him accordingly; but if good, he did not mean to let his left hand know what his right hand did.

"The above statement of facts I affirm to be true."

Signed,

LUCY HARRIS.

In addition to the above, it may be stated, that Harris visited this same forsaken and broken-hearted wife during her last illness; and when near her end, as he was sitting and carelessly writing by her side, she anxiously asked him what he was writing? Reader, can you imagine the prompt reply? He said, "I am writing a letter to the girl I intend to marry after you are dead!" And he actually married in about two weeks!! This is Mormonism! and here is the scribe and chief witness! We can now believe the prophet, when he accuses Harris, his compeer, of all sorts of debaucheries.

As regards the character of the two remaining witnesses, Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer, we would also refer to an inspired article, published in the "Times and Seasons," at Nauvoo, Illinois, (Vol. I., pages 81, 83, and 84,) over the name of the prophet himself.

The prophet there informs us, that certain persons, among whom are the names of Cowdery and Whitmer, "were busy in stirring up strife and turmoil among the brethren" in Mo., in 1838, and "that they were *studiously* engaged in circulating *false* and slanderous reports against the saints." On page 83, speaking of Whitmer, this inspired "Prophet of the Lord" himself exclaims, "Poor ass! whoever lives, will see him and his rider (*W. W. Phelps, another Mormon leader*) perish like those who perished in the gainsaying of Core, unless they repent." On page 84, speaking of the same witnesses, the prophet again exclaims, "Are they not murderers at heart? Are not their consciences seared with a hot iron?"

Query. Was this the first time these saints were engaged in circulating falsehood? Was this their first folly? No. The world saw both their knavery and their "long ears" long before the inspired prophet revealed them. But, whether they are really "asses" and "murderers," as the prophet pretends, or not, there can be no doubt that "their consciences long ago were seared as with a hot iron."

The prophet and his friends improve every year in the quality of their revelations to the world; they are becoming hourly more explicit and rational. If the ungodly "gentiles" will only let them alone, they will not only tell the truth, by and by, but the WHOLE TRUTH.

But Smith has not yet acquired sufficient credit to be believed, even when he testifies against himself and his cause. If he should affirm that he himself is a knave, that declaration alone would create the only rational doubt we can entertain that he is one. We cannot believe that his witnesses are as bad as he represents them to be, merely because he affirms it; although, before he affirmed it, there could be no doubt of it. We quote him, therefore, only for the edification of the "saints," and endeavor to remove the doubts which his testimony ought to create in other minds by proof from other sources.

David Stafford, of Manchester, N. Y., closes his testimony before Judge Smith in the following words:

"I can also state that Oliver Cowdery proved himself to be a worthless fellow, and not to be trusted or believed when he taught school in this neighborhood. After going into the ministry, while officiating in performing the ordinance of baptism in a brook, William, brother of the prophet, seeing a young man writing down what was said on a piece of board, was quite offended, and attempted to take it from him, kicked at him, and clinched for a scuffle. Such was the conduct of these pretended disciples of the Lord."

As regards Whitmer, we leave him to his subsequent apostacy and the tender mercies of his prophet.

In respect to these three witnesses, then, the only difficulty seems to be this: We cannot clearly see how "profane swearers, cheats, liars, swindlers, slanderers, murderers, debauchees, and asses," by *inspired testi-*

mony in 1838, should have been "*men of most unimpeachable veracity*, as the Mormons tell us they were, when they *endorsed* Smith's revelations in 1830.

We need the stone spectacles here. True, Judas fell from among the disciples, but we apprehend that, if the credibility of the Gospel rested either solely or mainly on the testimony of Judas, few, except the Mormons and others gifted with extraordinary powers of faith, could believe it. We believe Christ and his apostles partly on the ground of their intrinsic moral excellence, admitted even by their enemies. We reject Joe Smith and his comrades on the ground of their inherent infamy, admitted both by themselves and their dearest friends. This is the precise analogy between Mormonism and the Gospel of which the saints talk so much. So much for the character of the three witnesses, taking the testimony of the prophet and that of the abused and broken-hearted wife of the infamous Harris to corroborate him.

2. As regards *the capacity* of the witnesses, the reader is referred to a revelation given, June, 1829, through Joseph Smith, to these three identical witnesses the year before they appended their names to the Book of Mormon, which we will transcribe.

"Revelation to Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris, given through Joseph Smith, June, 1829, *previous* to their viewing the plates containing the Book of Mormon."

1. "Behold, I say unto you, that *you must rely upon my word;* which if you do *with full purpose of heart*, you shall have a view of the plates, and also of the breast-plate, the sword of Laban, the Urim and Thummim, which were given to the brother of Jared, upon

the mount, when he talked with the Lord face to face, and the miraculous directors, which were given to Lehi in the wilderness, on the borders of the Red Sea; and it is *by your faith* you shall *obtain a view* of them, even by that faith which was had by the prophets of old."

2. "And after you *have obtained faith*, and have seen them with your eyes, *you shall testify of them by the power of God;* and this you shall do, that *my servant Joseph Smith, jun., may not be destroyed*, that I may bring about my righteous purposes unto the children of men in this work. *And ye shall testify that you have seen them, even as* my servant Joseph Smith, jun., *has seen them;* for it is *by my power* he hath seen them, and it is because *he had faith.* And HE HAS TRANSLATED THE BOOK, even that part which I have commanded him, and AS YOUR LORD AND YOUR GOD LIVETH, IT IS TRUE."

3. "Wherefore you HAVE received the *same power*, and the *same faith*, and the *same gift, like unto him.* And if you do *these last commandments* of mine, which I have given you, the gates of hell shall not prevail against you; for my grace is sufficient for you; and you shall be lifted up in the last day. And I, Jesus Christ, your Lord and your God, have spoken it unto you, that I might bring about my righteous purposes unto the children of men. *Amen.*"

A revelation given to Martin Harris, by Smith,* March, 1829, also contains the identical words paraded forth to the world in the testimony of the three witnesses.

Verse 5. "And then shall he (Harris) say unto the people of this generation: Behold, I have seen the things which the Lord hath shown to Joseph Smith, jun., and *I know of a surety that they are true, for they have been shown unto me by the power of God, and not of man*, and these are the words he shall say," &c.

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* Page 160, B. C.

The voice of the Lord then, it seems, which informed the witnesses that Smith had translated the plates, and caused them *to know of a surety that they are true*, and commanded them to bear record of it, in 1830, in the Book of Mormon—this same voice came to them through the mouth of the Lord's prophet, Smith, in March and June preceding, that is, in 1829.

They are told in this revelation that they should obtain a view of the plates, or see them, not with their natural eyes, but with those spiritual eyes of faith with which the Mormons see so many marvels, viz, by the "eye of faith, even by that faith which was had by the prophets of old." This accords with the admissions of Martin Harris, who expressly stated that he did not see the plates with his natural eyes, but with "the eye of faith."

Here, then, is the "mighty power of God, the angel, and voice of the Lord," which revealed such marvels in 1830, all concentrated in the person, and pouring from the mouth of the Lord's prophet in 1829.

Was there ever impudence and stupidity like this? Why did the dunce publish that revelation to the world, especially since he has retained in his own hands, to this day, hundreds of others equally inspired? Was it for the express purpose of disclosing his own impudence and knavery? Or was it (as he himself once remarked to Peter Ingersoll) to see what the "d——d fools would believe."*

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* See affidavit of Ingersoll before Judge Baldwin, of Wayne co., N. Y.

But after all, these witnesses of inspiration did not testify to one half that Smith's divinity commanded them to declare. They were so absorbed in their visions and golden dreams about the plates, that they forgot to testify, as commanded, of the "breast-plate," the "sword of Laban," the "Urim and Thummim," the miraculous "directors," &c. &c. Perhaps this negligence was the reason that the said divinity gave them all over to subsequent unbelief and hardness of heart, to work all kind of abominations, and be "guilty of all manner of debaucheries," as the prophet assures us is the fact.

Their CAPACITY as witnesses, then, to say nothing of their honesty, amounts simply to this—Joe Smith puts the words of the Lord into their mouths, in 1829, and they repeat *a part* of the same to the world in 1830. Surely, if the prophet, in his pious rebuke of his witnesses, had only thought to have referred to this transaction, he might not only have *called* them "knaves and asses," but proved them such. Doubtless he thought the world would take his inspired testimony to the fact, without logical proof; *we only supply the proof*, without questioning the fact.

3. The DISINTERESTEDNESS of these witnesses is apparent from the fact that Harris expended the fortune which he had before possessed in transcribing and publishing the book,* in hope of a greater fortune, as his wife testified afterward. But, as the prophet did not see fit to redeem his pledge in this respect, Harris left the church in disgust and despair; that is, so far forth as such a creature could be either disgusted or despondent. We do not intend by this to deny that the usual

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* See B. C. 176.

anathemas against dissenters followed him, so as to make his apostacy seem to the world a matter of discipline.

Cowdery was also Smith's scribe, after the devil stole a part of the transcript, through the negligence of Martin; and inspired with the same hopes, he ran the same rig, and came to the same end, with Harris.

As to Whitmer, we commend him again to the tender mercy of his prophet and friends at Nauvoo. Their inspired testimony proves much more in regard to each of these witnesses than our cause demands; the surplus we leave for the edification of the saints.

The explicitness of their testimony is equally apparent. They give neither dates, place, time, nor circumstances of any kind whatever. Whether the angel appeared to them by night or by day, while asleep or awake, in this century or the last; (for all Mormons claim to have existed from eternity;) whether in the fields or in a temple, in a pig-sty or a brothel, does not appear; though from Harris's known character, we might presume the latter. At all events, it was where Joe Smith was in 1829, when he received the revelations given above. By looking at the pretended revelations, given while the work was preparing for the press, it will amuse the reader to notice by what artifices Smith's divinity courted up his witnesses, from time to time, to induce them to hold on and complete the work. Probably the next time he attempts to select aids and witnesses he will endeavor to make a better choice.

True, if Peter, Paul, and John, had all apostatized, it would not necessarily have ruined, though it might have seriously impaired the credibility of the New Testament; for it does not rest, either in whole or in part, on their naked testimony. Smith's book, on the contrary, is avowedly based on this rotten foundation, and necessarily falls with it; or rather, it fell in the very act of attempting to rear and plant it on such a foundation.

The sublime testimony of the second phalanx of eight witnesses is as follows:

"Be it known unto all nations, kindreds, tongues, and people, unto whom this work shall come, that Joseph Smith, Jr., AUTHOR and PROPRIETOR (!!) of this work, has shown unto us the plates, of *which hath been spoken*, which have the appearance of gold; and as many leaves as the *said Smith has translated*, we did handle with our hands, and we saw the engravings thereon, all of which has the appearance of ancient work and of curious workmanship. And this we bear record, with words of soberness, that the said Smith has shown unto us, for we have seen, and *hefted*, and *know of a surety*, that the said Smith has got the plates of which we have spoken. And we give our names unto the world, to witness unto the world that which we have seen, and we lie not, God bearing witness of it."

Signed,

CHRISTIAN WHITMER,
JACOB WHITMER,
PETER WHITMER, JR.,
JOHN WHITMER,
HIRAM PAGE, brother-in-law of the Whitmers,
JOSEPH SMITH, Sen.,
HYRUM SMITH,
SAMUEL H. SMITH.

By turning to the same revelation, quoted above, the reader will again see how this second platoon of witnesses "*hefted*," and "*knew of a surety*," that the said Smith had the plates "*of which hath been spoken*." It is Joe Smith, thought, style, and all, from a to izzard. And what does it all prove? First, that Joe Smith is *author* and *proprietor* of the Book of Mormon, as all the world knows. Second, that they saw and "hefted" some plates shown them by Smith. What if they did? How did they know what or how many plates Smith had translated, when by their own confession, they could not read a word on any of them? JOE SMITH TOLD THEM SO. And this is all their testimony amounts to, on the face of it, by their own showing. We are not only willing, but anxious to admit that Smith did show some plates, of some sort; and that they actually testify to the truth, so far as they were capable of knowing it, we are not only willing, but anxious to admit, in order to keep up a just and charitable equilibrium between the knaves and fools, in Mormonism and the world at large. Three to eight is at once a happy and reasonable proportion. We will not disturb it. It is gratifying to human philanthropy to be able to account for all the facts in the case by this charitable solution.

Three of these witnesses, we are boastingly told, died in the faith; and we should naturally have expected that any man who could have been induced to set his name to such a silly paper as that is, would have died in almost any faith. The only thing that looks strange about it is, that all the rest, except the brothers of the prophet, have had sense enough to apostatize and leave the church, (with proper discipline, of course.) Perhaps it is well for the world, and well for these three, that they did not live to go the same way with all the rest, and fall with Harris into "all manner of abominations."

The whole, then, of this mighty array of bombast, nonsense, and blasphemy, resolves itself into this:

Joe Smith is not only AUTHOR and PROPRIETOR of the Book of Mormon, as both he and his witnesses declare, but he is also "power of God," "angel," "voice," "faith," "eyes," ears and *hands* for the witnesses themselves; that is, all the evidence the world has for the Book of Mormon, after all this bluster, is "*Joe Smith's say so.*" *He says* that God instructs him, he instructs the witnesses, and the witnesses instruct the world. *Quod erat demonstrandum.* David Whitmer reported that the angel, which appeared unto him, "was like a man in gray clothes, having his throat cut." This was probably a prophetic vision, indicating the true desert of the real author.*

Since, then, we are obliged, after all, to take Joe's word, simply, for his new bible, it may be interesting to the world to know how he was enabled to translate it, out of the Reformed Egyptian, into "*patent* English." He has told us that he looked into his stone spectacles, and saw the words pass before his mind. But he informs us more explicitly still, in the famous book of Revelations and Covenants, in which, after all, it must be candidly admitted, that the Lord has clearly revealed some things—at least one, and that is the KNAVERY OF JOE SMITH.

If the reader will turn to the revelation given by Smith to O. Cowdery, in Harmony, Penn., April, 1829, while translating the Gold Bible, (see B. C., 110,) he will perceive that Oliver's faith had begun to fail. He had got tired of writing the gibberish of Smith, and needed a word of exhortation and encouragement. Smith's divinity gives him both, of course, and also, to pacify him, grants him the gift to translate, "even as my servant Joseph," (ver. 11.) At this, it appears that Oliver took courage, put on the spectacles, planted himself, in due order, before the mystic plates, and looked with all his might, but saw nothing. Oliver, of course, becomes more uneasy and intractable than ever. He complains more than before, and with more reason, too. And now, for a new revelation, of the same date, *pat* upon the other, which contained the grant of the gift to Oliver to translate.*

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* In further elucidation of what Mormons mean by the "power of God," the reader is referred to B. M. 420, 421; B. C. 102, v. 12—173, v. 5. It will there be seen that this voice and power of God is a small affair, which every enthusiast can have, and see at any time he pleases, especially if Smith is at hand.

We will quote a verse or two of this revelation from Smith's "unchanging Deity."† Verse 2, page 162: "Be patient, my son Oliver, for it is wisdom in me, and it is not expedient that you should translate *at this present time.* Behold, the work you are called to do is *to write for my servant Joseph.* And behold, it is because you did not continue, as you commenced, when you began to translate, that I have taken away this privilege from you. Do not murmur, my son, for it is wisdom in me that I have dealt with you after this manner." (Undoubtedly!!)

Verse 3: "Behold, you have not understood. You have supposed that I would *give it unto you,* when *you took no thought, save it was to ask me.* But behold, I say unto you, YOU MUST STUDY IT OUT IN YOUR OWN MIND. (!) Then you must ask me if it be right; and

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* B. C., 162.

† See also B. C., 150.

if it is right, I will cause that YOUR BOSOM SHALL BURN *within you.* THEREFORE (!!) you shall FEEL that it is RIGHT. But if it is *not* right, you shall have no such feelings; but you shall have a STUPOR of *thought,* that shall cause you to *forget* the thing which is *wrong.* THEREFORE (!!) you cannot write that which is *sacred,* save it be given you from me." 2d ed.

Here, in the first place, we see that Smith's divinity found it expedient "*to deviate a little,*" and retract the divinity-given gift conferred the same day.

In the second, we have his patent divine prescription for writing *things sacred,* in detail; and, of course, the method which Smith has followed in translating his bible, and giving his other revelations to the world. He "STUDIED IT OUT IN HIS OWN MIND," and when he got it right, "*his bosom burned,*" of course. With this patent recipe before him, we see not why any man might not translate, or give revelations, as well as Smith, unless he was afflicted with that unaccountable *stupor of thought,* which seems to unfit all other Mormons for the work, except Smith. Perhaps, if brother Cowdery should try his hand at it now, since he has had wit enough to leave the Mormons, he would succeed in raising the needful heat better than before.

Those in other churches, who are in the habit of practising upon the same principle, would do well to commit Smith's rule to memory, since it accurately describes the process of securing miraculous confirmations of any known or imagined truth.

CHAPTER VI.

CLAIMS OF THE BOOK OF MORMON TO CREDIBILITY AND AUTHORITY—CONTINUED.

Evidence from prophecy—Internal evidence—Jared's barges—One hundred and sixteen pages stolen—Patent English—Style, authorship, and titles—Real origin of the Book of Mormon—Origin of the stone spectacles—Smith's four years' vacation—Testimony of John Spaulding—of Henry Lake—The Spaulding Manuscript—Smith's meeting with Harris—Probable mode of acquiring the book—Wonderful providences—War with Missouri yet to come.

THE next claim which the Mormons set up is, that they can prove the truth of their book from the prophecies of the sacred Scriptures.

We confess we enter with reluctance upon a field which has, in all ages, been the favorite resort of enthusiasts and dreamers; the prolific fountain from which fanaticisms of all shapes have leaped forth, like John's frogs, out of the mouth of the dragon, to swell and prance for a time, and then retire, and leave the world to gaze at other wonders, equally sublime, equally demonstrable, and equally absurd.

These self-complacent conjurers can all handle the mystic symbols of Isaiah, Ezekiel, and St. John, with the same ease and grace that a well-bred lady does her teapot; and each can divine the coming destiny of the world, from the resplendent bubbles in his own chosen urn of prophecy, with the same facility and certainty as an old woman can predict the next visiter, from the grounds in her cup.

Alternate famines, plagues, wars, and milleniums start up on all sides; the world comes quite up to the day of final retribution, misses it, and starts off again, in quest of new waters of life, and visions of glory, in the mirage ahead. But visions, dates, wonders, and expositors, all retreat as it advances, to make room for a new corps of conjurers.

Doubtless we are now on the eve of great events. All say so, even the inspired General at Nauvoo; and many things, indeed, seem like it. But be this as it may, we are surely *under* the *eaves*, and amid the continual droppings of new schemes of theological nonsense. Our credulity is drenched through and through, and what little common sense there ever was in any of us has become so plastic and pliant, that it fits all surfaces equally well. We doubt not that the prophecies of the Holy Scriptures will all be both fulfilled and understood, in their own due time.

But, with the immortal Newton, we also believe that God, in giving them, did *not* design to make men prophets. On this point we differ from Joe Smith and all his coadjutors, however pious or impious, learned or unlearned. But as the General has taken his stand, not only among the humble interpreters of prophecies already fulfilled, but also in the ranks of those who look deep and far ahead in things divine, we must hear him.

The fundamental propositions upon which we are to proceed, as the "saints" assure us, are these.

1. All prophecies which have been heretofore fulfilled have been literally fulfilled; therefore,

2. All which are to come must be literally fulfilled also.*

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* See Pratt's Voice of Warning, p. 18.

We will not contest this ground. We will admit, if the Mormons choose, the literal return of the Jews, the literal rebuilding of their temple and city, and the literal reign of the Messiah. But, after all, we fear there may be some difficulty in deciding what is, and what is not, the literal interpretation of prophecy. Since, for example, according to the "saints'" own showing, trees, and golden heads, iron legs, lions, bears, and brutes with iron teeth, in the prophetic visions which are *explained*, mean kingdoms and nations, according to the interpretation both of Daniel and the "saints," we would ask how, in the name of common sense, it happens that the same or similar things may not mean the same or similar things in those prophetic visions which are *unexplained*. Or are we literally, hereafter, to hear trumpets blowing, see angels flying, vials pouring, dragons crawling, horses prancing, devils fighting, scorpions stinging, pits smoking, frogs leaping, and harlots riding? Are these things to constitute the millenium glory of the "Church of Latter Day Saints?" We confess they look somewhat like it. Or have these things been already *literally* fulfilled? We know of but one event, in the past history of the world, which much resembles it, and that was in the conflict between Joe Smith and Gov. Boggs, of Missouri. But perhaps these, and similar wonderful *literal* displays of prophecy, are reserved for Mount Zion, in Jackson county, Mo. If so, we pardon the announcement, and dismiss our fears for the present.

In this business of interpreting prophecy, the author confesses that he is by no means an equal and suitable champion for his Mormon friends. He will not therefore enter profoundly into the subject, lest he should be worsted in a good cause. The spiritual Goliath, which the sublime sanctity of their faith calls for, should be able to throw himself boldly, and at once, upon the teachings of the Spirit, without at all relying even upon the capacity to read intelligibly the English text, and trust to the Mormon deity, or at least to Joe, and Sidney, and Parley Pratt, to help him out. I confess I have not faith. On their own principles they ought not, therefore, to expect much from me; and the public surely will not want much.

The first point to be made out by the Mormons from Scripture is, that the North American Indians are the descendants of Joseph, as the Book of Mormon asserts.

To this end, they refer to Jacob's blessing on the seed of Joseph, Genesis xlix. ver. 22—26. In order to interpret and apply this passage *literally*, they make Joseph's bough, "running over the wall," (verse 22) to mean the progenitors of the American Indians crossing the Atlantic ocean to this country. The Atlantic ocean is therefore the *literal* wall. Whether it is a plastered wall, or a brick wall, or a stone wall, we are not informed; at all events it is a *literal wall.* We would respectfully suggest to these interpreters whether it would not do to consider it a mud wall; for the prophet Shakspeare speaks of the "slimy deep;" and when we interpret literally, we must compare all prophets, of the Mormon school, together, and proceed according to the analogy of the faith. This is clear enough then.*

Verse 23. "The archers *have* sorely grieved him, shot at him, and hated him." This, they say, was fulfilled when our forefathers fought with the Indians;—with bows and arrows of course, for we must take it literally, and all know that the people of the United States usually fight with bows and arrows. Besides, it is in the past tense; of course our forefathers had already fought the Indians before Jacob pronounced the blessing upon their progenitor, Joseph.*

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* See Joshua, xvii. 14, 15.

Verse 24. "But his bow abode in strength, and his hands were made strong by the mighty God of Jacob," &c. This verse has been *literally* fulfilling upon the Indians ever since the discovery of the continent, as their immense increase and prosperity shows. Ask Cotton Mather and the U. S. congress whether it is not so.

In the literal interpretation of the 25th verse, the prophet and the Book of Mormon are to come in and play a conspicuous part in the restoration and blessing of the Indians. But, not having the stone spectacles at hand, we are unable to give the exact literal interpretation. We have heard the Mormons do it to admiration; but it requires a man under the immediate guidance of the spirit, that is, the spirit of Smith; but here again our faith fails us. We can assure our readers, however, that the verse is regarded as having undoubtedly a special reference to Joe Smith and the Book of Mormon. We have heard the most gifted Mormon interpreters so expound it.

Verse 26. "The blessing of thy fathers hath prevailed to the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills." "Now, reader," says Parley Pratt, "stand in Egypt where Jacob stood, and measure to the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills, and you will land somewhere in the central part of America." Bravo! Precisely so. The exact spot, however, in order to be particularly *literal*, would, no doubt, be found to be Mt. Zion, Jackson county, Mo. But we would respectfully advise the reader, as he brings the sweep of his spiritual compass round near Missouri, to keep a good look out for Gov. Boggs, lest he should jog the moving foot a little, and cause an error in the data. With this precaution the measure will be found accurate.

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* Compare Genesis, chap. 37, for hatred of his brethren.

This inspired exposition also throws light upon several other and kindred passages of Scripture which have perplexed commentators not a little, as Matt. xii. 42, where it is said, the queen of Sheba came from the uttermost parts of the earth; and, Acts i. 8, where the apostles are commanded to be witnesses to the uttermost parts of the earth. For, by parallel reasoning, the said queen came from the central parts of America, and the apostles were to preach there too. This too accounts for the fact, that the North American Indians knew so much about the gospel, before Christ was born, as the book of Smith shows that they did.

Again, Gen. xlviii. 16, "Let the sons of Joseph grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth," and "Ephraim's seed shall become a multitude of nations." Again, says Pratt, "One of the prophets says, in speaking of Ephraim, 'when the Lord shall roar, the children of Ephraim shall tremble from the west.'" And this prophecy, like all others, is to be fulfilled literally. When it is, what a trembling there must be in Missouri, and in all the west! "Now," says Pratt, "put these three things together; *first*, 'Ephraim shall grow into a multitude of nations in the midst of the earth;' *second*, Joseph was to be greatly blessed in a large inheritance as far off as America; *third*, this was to be west from Egypt, or Jerusalem. *Therefore*, these scriptures must apply to

America, because they can apply nowhere else." This inspired logic reminds one of the boy who said that oranges grew on pine trees; for, if not, where did they grow?

Having thus got the seed of Joseph safely over the "*wall*," we are next referred to the 37th chapter, 16th verse, of Ezekiel, where we are told that the stick of Ephraim, or Joseph, means the Book of Mormon,* and the stick of Judah the Bible. Joe Smith is of course the *literal* Ezekiel, in whose hands they are to be joined. I suppose the Book of Mormon is here *literally* called a stick, because it is the instrument with which Joe Smith belabors the backs of his dupes. But why the Bible should be *literally* called a stick, or why Joe Smith should be the literal Ezekiel, it is not so easy to divine. Moreover, this said stick of Joseph, the Book of Mormon, was to be found in the hands of Ephraim, that is, in the hands of the North American Indians, from whom Smith professed to have inherited it. But by comparing the first part of chapter 7, of the Book of Alma,† with the title-page, the first page, and the testimony of the witnesses, on the last page of the Book of Mormon, the reader will see that, according to the Book of Mormon itself, there never was a *literal* descendant of Ephraim on this continent, but that the several tribes were all from Manasseh. Still, we must take it literally. Where, then, are the Ephraimites, or the ten tribes, who are to hold this stick? The Book of Mormon says not a word about the tribe of Ephraim, or any of the ten tribes except that of Manasseh. This was a sad mistake in the prophet: probably the type

* B. C., 180. 2.

† B. M., 248 of first and 264 of the second edition.

will need correcting, as regards this genealogy of the Indians, in the next inspired edition of Smith's book.

Again, this union of sticks, whether we interpret literally, or metaphysically, or grandiloquently, or spiritually, must still refer to a union, not of two sticks, but of two people, viz—the ten tribes, or children of Israel, and the children of Judah, as the 21st and 22d verses plainly show. Where are these ten lost tribes? Does the Book of Mormon tell? Can Smith tell? Pratt, on this point, exultingly exclaims—Can any one tell whether the Indians of America are of Israel, unless the Lord should reveal it?* Answer—No. Therefore Joe Smith cannot tell, any more than Cock Robin can. But as we are informed, on the same page, that "our very existence depends on an *immediate* understanding of the important prophecies of the Book of Mormon," we would beg to have some of these difficulties solved.

Again, we are told that the verse in the 85th Psalm—"Truth shall spring out of the earth, and righteousness shall look down from heaven"—refers to Smith's digging the Book of Mormon out of the hill Camorah! On that memorable night, say the "saints," truth sprung out of the earth. We are disposed to admit, that, on that woful night, so far as Smith and his followers are concerned, truth, and common sense too, *sprung away* from the earth, and righteousness has *looked down*, everywhere, and with good reason too. We would gladly encourage her to look up again.

We have now not only got Israel over the "wall," but also beyond the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills; and we are content to leave them there, books, sticks, and all, without tracing further either the literal

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* Voice of Warning, p. 135.

Mormon interpretation of the 29th of Isaiah, or of the other prophecies of the Old Testament.

We will, however, stop one moment to look at the angel spoken of in vi. 7, of Revelation, as flying in the midst of heaven, &c. And who, gentle reader, do you think this angel is, according to the "saints"? Why, we are told that it is the angel who delivered the plates to Joe Smith, on the hill Camorah, New York!* We must remember to take it literally. Smith pretends that the gospel, which the angel had when John saw him, was the Book of Mormon. When Smith saw this angel, he says, he was standing on the hill Camorah, and the book, or gospel, was lying in a stone box, where it had been lying for fourteen hundred years. John, of course, therefore, saw him in his vision, after Smith saw him personally, and after he had got the book, and was flying away with it; and neither John nor Smith pretends that he ever brought it back again. The angel, it seems, flew away with the book, and left Smith to patch up his lying marvels, as best he could, out of whatever old manuscripts he might chance to find, whether Spaulding's or those of others. Probably he made the best of his way towards the ten lost tribes, near Symmes' Hole, where Smith at first told his dupes these tribes had been for centuries, hedged in by mountains of ice, which the fervor of his inspiration was soon to melt, and let them flow down, on rivers of gold, to Mount Zion, in Jackson county, Mo.

In one respect, however, it must be confessed that this divine prophecy applies literally to Smith. The angel said that the hour of God's judgment had come, as, indeed, it has, upon all the dupes of Joe Smith.

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* See B. C., 248.

If these specimens of inspired *literal* interpretation of prophecy do not satisfy both the "saints" and the reader, we will give more when we write again on this subject.

4. We will next consider, in brief, the claims of the Book of Mormon on the ground of its own internal excellence.

The "saints" contend that there has been no true church on earth, before their own, for several hundred years. In this we think they are too fast; for we read in the Book of Mormon, page 192, that one Alma went into the fountain of Mormon and baptized both himself and his companions.

Now the "saints" do not positively know, that, in the general darkness of the church, some other pious individual may not have been taught of the Mormon Spirit to do the same thing, and thus to institute a pure church even amidst heathenish darkness. Who baptized Joe Smith before he baptized the rest, in Fayette, N. Y.? Did he also first baptize himself? or did a good or a bad angel do it for him? For, according to his own showing, there was no man on earth fit to do it.

We read in II. Kings, xvii. 20, "That the Lord *rejected all* the seed of Israel, (the ten tribes,) and delivered them into the hands of the spoiler, until he had cast them out of his sight." Verse 18: "There was *none* left, but the house of Judah *only*." I. Kings, xii. 20: "There was none that followed the house of David, but the tribe of Judah only."

How, then, came Joe Smith to find out that one of the families of Manasseh were not only spared, but followed, with the peculiar and miraculous care of God, for hundreds of years after?

In Numbers, iii. 10, Deut., xxi. 5, Num., xvi. 19, and chap. xviii., it will be seen that the Lord irrevocably conferred the priesthood on the house of Aaron, slew 250 officiates and above 14,000 of the people, as a memorial that no other tribe should intermiddle therewith. Paul also informs us, Heb., vii. 13, that even Christ could not be a Jewish priest, because he was not of the house of Aaron.

Yet Smith finds the North American Indians, who were, by his own showing, every soul of them of the tribe of Manasseh, not only building temples 5000 miles from Jerusalem, where alone the Jews were to worship, but offering sacrifice, and performing all the functions of the priesthood, acceptably to the Lord, and still exhorting each other to keep the law of Moses.* Moreover, even God himself is represented as inspiring this Manassite, whom the Bible informs us he had cursed "out of his sight," guiding him across unknown wastes and trackless floods, and finally miraculously establishing and ratifying his sacrilegious worship in these western wilds. Here they baptize, found churches, and discuss and decide all the petty theological controversies, which have happened to rage, in the state of New-York, since Joe Smith was born. For obvious reasons, these inspired visions seem to have concentrated solely upon a single age and a single state. They make, also, some very judicious suggestions as regards republican freedom, freemasonry, navigation, shipbuilding, mariners' compasses, manufacturing glass, &c., &c., and all this, in part before the birth of Christ, and in whole before the close of the fifth century; while still they did not know either where Christ was born,* or that the Jews were not Christians before his birth.

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* B. M., 146, 208-9.

The prophet may either class the above among the internal evidences of his book, or set them down as proofs of its inspiration, derived from the Scriptures, as he chooses; and when he has satisfactorily settled their location, it will be easy to furnish him with many more proofs of the same kind.

That there is not much important truth in Smith's book, no one will affirm. The Bible, and the abundant quotations from it, garbled and perverted though they are, have shed a moral light upon its pages, which not even the stupidity, the vulgarity, and sacrilegious profanation of Smith could wholly extinguish.

This often deceives the stupid, the credulous, and the unwary. They pronounce it a very good book, and so, indeed, it would be, so far as its moral teaching is concerned, did it only profess to be what it really is, "a vulgar romance of the lowest order." But, in that case, it would soon rot on the shelves of the antiquary. Many, on reading it now, say, "It is not so bad as we thought it was;" "it reads much like the Bible!" "How people have misrepresented it!" They do not consider that there is not a single idea in it, excepting such as have been stolen from the Scriptures, which is not either useless, or ridiculous, or absurd.

We will give but one specimen of its originality, and that is the description of Jared's barges, in the book of Ether, page 542 of the first edition. It must be remembered, that our prophet had been raised in the interior of New-York, and probably never saw even a correct picture of a ship in his life. When he entered upon the task of describing one, therefore, the attempt was more hazardous than either repeating the substance of Spaulding's old manuscript, or stealing extracts from the Bible. The reader will judge of his success.

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* B. M., 240.

"And it came to pass, that the brother of Jared built barges *according to the instructions of the Lord.* And they were small, and they were light upon the water, even like unto the lightness of a fowl upon the water; and they were built after a manner that they were exceeding tight, even that they would hold water like unto a dish. And the bottom thereof was tight, like unto a dish, and the sides thereof was tight, like unto a dish: and the ends thereof were peaked, and the *top* thereof was tight, like unto a dish; and the length thereof was the length of a tree; and the door thereof was tight, like unto a dish.

"And it came to pass that the brother of Jared cried unto the Lord, saying: Oh Lord, I have made the barges according as thou hast directed me. And behold, O Lord, there is no light in them, whither we shall steer. And also we shall perish; for in them we cannot breathe save the air which is in them: therefore we shall perish. And the Lord said unto Jared, Behold, thou shalt make a hole in the top thereof, and also in the BOTTOM thereof; and when thou shalt suffer for air, thou shalt unstop the hole thereof and receive air. And if it be that the water come in upon thee, behold, ye shall STOP the hole thereof, that ye may not perish in the flood. And it came to pass that the brother of Jared did so, as the Lord had commanded.

And he cried again unto the Lord, saying: O Lord, I have done as thou hast commanded, I have prepared the vessels for my people, and behold, there is no light in them. Behold, O Lord, wilt thou suffer that we should cross this great water in darkness? And the Lord said unto the brother of Jared, What will ye that I should do, that ye may have light in your vessels? for behold, ye cannot have windows, for they will be dashed in pieces. Neither shall ye take fire with you, for ye shall not go by the light of fire; for behold, ye shall be as a whale in the midst of the sea, for the mountain waves shall dash upon you. Nevertheless, I will bring you up again out of the depths of the sea; for the winds have gone forth out of *my mouth*, and also the rains and the floods have I sent forth. And behold, *I prepare you* (?) against these things: for howbeit ye cannot cross this great deep save I *prepare* you against the waves of the sea, and the winds that have gone forth, and the floods that shall come. Therefore what will ye that I should prepare for you, that ye may have light when ye are swallowed up in the depths of the sea?"

"And it came to pass that the brethren of Jared went forth unto a mountain, and did *moulten* out of a rock sixteen small stones, and they were white and clear, even as transparent as glass. And he did carry them in his hands upon the top of the mount, and cried again unto the Lord, saying—'Oh Lord, touch these stones with thy finger, and prepare them that they may shine forth in darkness, that we may have light when we shall cross the sea.' And it came to pass that the Lord stretched forth his hand and touched the stones, one by one, with his finger, and the brethren of Jared saw the finger of the Lord, and it was the finger of a man, like unto flesh and blood"!

It will be observed that these barges or boats were built "according to the instructions of the Lord;" that they were made tight as a dish, bottom, sides, top, door, and all; though it is as difficult to say how tight the top of a dish is, as it is to say, definitely, how long a tree is, or how peaked the ends were, or what sort of fowl is intended. But, as they were built from definite instructions, we may presume that they were as tight as a teapot, about as long as a "piece of chalk," as light as a turkey-buzzard, and as peaked as a hay-stack, or thereabouts. This is as near as we can approximate to the exact idea, without the inflatus of direct Mormon inspiration.

It will be seen at once, that in barges intended to traverse the Atlantic ocean, a hole in the bottom would be indispensable, in order to furnish the crew with sea-water to drink; and a hole in the top would be equally necessary for fresh air, especially when these sea-fowl barges should choose to dive, and sail under water for a while. Hence, the plugs for the holes would be equally necessary after they had "squenched" their thirst, as the prophet would say.

The only wonder is, that the Mormon deity did not think of these things, and of the ten stones "moulten" out of a rock, before Jared's brother suggested them; but, in building so many great barges, how could he think of every thing? Perhaps, too, the devil had just been plaguing him about the hundred a sixteen pages. And here we will give the story of these pages at length, as one of the internal evidences of the divine authority of the book.

In the summer of 1828, while Harris was writing Smith's translation for him, he took one hundred and sixteen pages, which he had finished, put them in a drawer, and locked it, but forgot to lock the drawer above. Mrs. Harris, his wife, taking advantage of the oversight, slipped out the top drawer, and took away the manuscript. Harris demanded it. She refused to give it up. He beat her, as we have seen in her affidavit, but she still persisted. She properly told him that, if God had translated it once, he could do it again; and her friends encouraged her to keep the first copy to compare with the second. Here was a dilemma. Seemingly, either to write or not to write again, was ruin, for they had already announced that they had written the history of the *origin* of the Nephites, or American aborigines. The guiding divinity of Smith, whom he calls the Lord, wanted, it seems, some time to think of it. Accordingly, in July, 1828, he gives Smith a revelation,* in which, after rebuking him for his negligence, and intimating that his work was ended for the present, he kindly informs him that after due repentance he shall be called again to the work. From July, 1828, to May, 1829, it seems that this Lord had sufficient time to consider, and Smith to repent, and, accordingly, at that time Smith had another revelation,† in which his divinity attempted to conceal, as well as he could, the awkwardness of Smith's position; and after uttering now a word of consolation, now a threat, and now a bluster, he at last, with much swaggering, comes to the point, grapples in with Satan, and explicitly charges him with stealing the hundred and sixteen pages. But, as Satan was not there to deny it, nor Mrs. Harris to own it, he most manfully addresses himself at once to the task of outwitting the devil; since, after ten months' trial, he could neither flatter nor force him to give up the record which he had preserved, with such miraculous care, through fourteen hundred years, and on which, we are assured, the salvation of the world depended. But these ten months' reflection not only prepared him for the valorous enterprise before him, but most fortunately, in the mean time, he discovered that he had also another set of plates, called plates of Nephi, which, *though different*, were just as good, and even better than the plates of Lehi. "Now," says he, "the devil has got a part of the record from the plates of Lehi, and we can't get it again; but we will outwit him, Jose, for I have got some more just as good, and better too."

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* B. C. 156.

† B. C. 163.

I have heard many Mormons say that there were wonderful things in the Book of Mormon. I agree with them. I think this the most wonderful instance of a deity's outwitting the devil anywhere on record. The Mormons surely ought to return their sincere thanks to his satanic majesty, for, by Smith's own showing, they have got a much better revelation, one which "throws much greater views upon the gospel,"* than they would have had if he had not kindly, though mischievously, interposed; for Smith's divinity himself acknowledges, in the last revelation, after taking ten months to reflect upon it, that it is indeed wisdom to translate the other plates. I wonder if the devil borrowed the Lord's barges to carry off the record with? It seems both rational and probable, for, in that case, their wonderful power of diving would render the recovery of the record quite impossible. And yet, (if the reader will believe it,) Smith not only had the impudence to publish these revelations at length to the world in the Book of Covenants, but he also attached an abstract of them, as a preface, to the first edition of the Book of Mormon! He threw out this absurd nonsense on the very first page of his book! Surely he must have desired, as he is once reported to have said, "to see what the d——d fools would believe."

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* B. C. 165.

This, however, was a little too much even for Mormons; and, in the second inspired edition of the Book of Mormon, Smith's divinity deemed it prudent to reckon this whole preface among the "typographical errors of the first edition," and accordingly threw it out altogether. But it is retained, with some few modifications, in the second edition of the Book of Commandments, for the edification of the "saints." With this plain, matter-of-fact exposition, I should hope, were not hope in such a case utterly in vain, that they too may be illuminated by its truth.

After all, Smith, according to his own showing, disobeyed the express command of God, and gave his *whole* history to the world from the plates of Nephi, instead of only that *part* which had been stolen, as the Lord commanded him. This may be seen by comparing the preface of the first edition, or B. C. 163, with the testimony of the eight and title-page of the Book of Mormon.*

In a revelation, given March, 1829,† Smith is commanded to bring forth his book, under the testimony of three witnesses, and no more.

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* See also B. M. 464, 532, 151, &c.

† B. C. 159: also B. M. 548.

But when these three chosen witnesses had become so notoriously infamous, that it was rendered expedient to seek for eight more, it seems that the passages on pages 86, 110, &c., in the Book of Mormon, were interpolated to make room for the valorous eight, while the above passages were overlooked. It will, however, probably all come right in future corrections of "the errors of the press."

We must remember that, according to Smith's story, the Lord is responsible not only for the thought, but also for the language, of this new translation. The words of the translation were read off through the stone spectacles.

On page 548, B. M., it is pronounced "a work in the which shall be shown forth the power of God."

We will give a few specimens of this patent English, showing forth the linguistic power of Smith's divinity.

"Plates of which *hath been spoken*" (see testimony, preface, pages 335, '6, &c.) When the "law *had* ought to be done away" (p. 106); "knowledge of *they* which are at Jerusalem;" "concerning *they* which shall be scattered" (56); "unto *they* which are of the house of Israel" (57); "unto all *they* that believe" (107); "unto all *they* that are filled with the Spirit;" "*for because they yieldeth* unto the devil" (107); "I had *spake* many things unto them;" "for a *more history part* are written upon mine other plates" (69); "*I who* ye call your king;" "they *saith* unto the king" (182).

But it is in vain; these things are found on every page of the first edition. No accurate idea can be given of this patent inspired English without reprinting the whole book. On page 533, we are told that "if there be faults, they be the faults of man:" this we never doubted. But, since we are informed that this translation was made through certain stone spectacles, which the Lord has kept from the beginning, for the special purpose of translating and revealing words to mortal eyes,* the profane may wonder at the awkward result.

Not so the devout "saint" of the Mormon school. He knows how the devil pestered and perplexed Smith's divinity through the whole process of translation; and it is reasonable to suppose, that due watchfulness over this mischievous imp had confined this said divinity for several years exclusively to the vicinity of Western New-York. The philosophic mind will readily see that such confinement would necessarily tend to fasten upon his style all the peculiar vulgarisms of Western New-York, to the exclusion of all others.

We are more inclined to this view of the case, because we notice, that after he got the matter finally arranged with the devil, the language, in the second inspired edition, is much improved. After this remarkable divinity had availed himself of some rest, and much leisure to travel with Smith, we not only find the general style of his subsequent revelations much improved, but even New-York vulgarisms give place to those of a more Western origin.

Some have attributed these gradual improvements, in more recent editions and revelations, to extensive practice on the part of Smith, and the correcting hand of Rigdon.

We discard the profane suggestion. Others complain that the entire style of some twenty different writers, of as many different ages, is one and the same thing from beginning to end—testimony of the witnesses, preface, title-page, and all—while the styles of no other two writers on earth, sacred or profane, are alike, but exhibit totally different characteristics.

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* B. M., 216.

This, however, is readily accounted for upon the doctrine of the three unities, as every scholar knows. We are told that this is a "perfect gospel," and we know that every perfect composition should possess perfect unity of thought and style. The prophet's book adds but one excellence more, and that is a perfect vacuity of both.

Here, then, are the three unities—unity of thought, unity of style, and unity of vacuums. Uniformity of style is indeed an excellence, which it possesses in the highest degree. It is all Joe Smith, from preface to finis, testimonies and all. *Joe Smith* is sole author and proprietor, as he himself claimed on the title-page of the first edition; and why he should have abandoned that claim, and called himself a mere translator, in the second edition, we cannot divine. Perhaps he had that revelation in mind, which commanded him "to aspire to no other gift, save to translate;" but from which restriction he has been released by the interpolated clauses of the second inspired edition.

From this brief view of the internal evidence of the Book of Mormon, we are happy to inform the public that, in one point at least, we fully agree with the prophet—viz, that Joseph Smith, jr., "President, seer, translator, prophet, apostle, and elder of the church of Latter Day Saints throughout the earth;" "Dealer in town lots, temples, merchandise, bank stock, and prairie lands, retailer of books, stationery, cap, letter, fool, and wrapping paper, and GENERAL OF NAUVOO MILITIA," is the real, sole author and proprietor of the Book of Mormon, in its present form, as he himself claims, in spite of the injunction to aspire to *no other* gift, save to translate. *Quod erat demonstrandum.*

The reader will find that all these titles are really claimed by the prophet, by consulting the "Book of Covenants," and the "Times and Seasons."

But although we admit that Smith is the author and proprietor of the Book of Mormon as it now is, still we feel bound to advert to the original sources of the ideas which are found in that book. And in the first place, in utter mockery and defiance of all chronology, all history, sacred or profane, all order of time, place, or style, and of all common sense too, this book is bespangled from beginning to end not only with thoughts of sacred writers, but with copious verbal extracts from King James' translation, as well as with an appropriate adjudication of all the New York controversies of the day. The controversies of Europe, and of different portions of the Union, apart from the state of New York, Smith's guardian genius seems, in a great measure, to have overlooked, either as unworthy of notice, or because his attention for the time was confined to the golden plates, of "which hath been spoken."

It is also observable that Smith's inspiring spirit uses very decent language when he confines himself strictly to King James' translation. In this lies the crowning excellency of the book. In spite of their monstrous perversions, these extracts from sacred writ shine like jewels in a dunghill. Isaiah, the prophets, and apostles, and Joe Smith, side by side, are like a team of alternate lions and polecats. Still this is not a full account of the matter. Although any blunderhead, with the Bible at his side, might have written the book, and the greater the blunderhead the better, still there are some reasons to believe that Smith is not the original author even of the gibberish that constitutes the plot of the comedy. A word therefore upon this point will not be amiss. And first, as regards the origin of the stone spectacles which Smith tells us the Lord keeps for translating revelations, and which he lent to Smith for that purpose, Smith has told us part of the truth; we will tell the whole of it.

In the affidavits already referred to, as given before Frederick King, justice of the peace, Wayne county, N. Y., the following facts are developed:

William Chase swears that in 1822, while Joe Smith and his brother were aiding him in digging a well, he found a curious stone, about twenty feet from the surface, and brought it to the top of the well. "Joseph put it into his hat, alleging that by putting his face to the top of it, he could see in it."

The next day he came and desired to obtain the stone. Chase, with some reluctance, consented to lend it to him. But after Smith began to publish what wonders he could see in it, Chase ordered it returned.

In 1825, as near as witness can recollect, Smith's brother came and desired to borrow the stone again, alleging that they wanted to accomplish some business of importance which could not be done without it, pledging also his word and honor, that he would return it. Chase again consented to let him have it. In the fall of 1826, a friend called upon Chase and desired to see the stone, and, on his going to Smith's for it, Smith told him he could not have it. Chase insisted that it was his property. Smith replied, "I do not care who in the devil it belongs to; you shall not have it;" and Chase could never again obtain it.

In 1830, Chase again asked Hiram Smith for his stone. He told him "he should not have it, for Joseph made use of it in translating his bible." Chase claimed it on the ground of his own right, and of Smith's promise. Smith gave him the lie. Harris, who was present, "flew in a rage, and took Chase by the collar," and Hiram Smith joined in the scuffle, "shaking his fists," and "abusing the witness in a most scandalous manner."

Such, then, was the origin of these stones, and of Smith's wonderful gift of clairvoyance, translating, and foreseeing the future, &c. &c.

In September, 1823, Smith says the angel first appeared to him, and soon after he went to work for a man by the name of Stowell, in Chenango county, N. Y., who employed him to dig for money near Harmony, Penn. In November, 1825, Mr. Hale, his father-in-law, states that he first appeared at his house. Of course he had already been in and about that region two years, or thereabouts. In the fall of 1826, we find him again at home, without funds, and devising stories about silver mines in order to get a passage to Harmony; he succeeds, arrives, and marries, as we have seen, and then persuades his old employer, Stowell, to take a tramp to N. York, and carry Smith and his new bride in quest of bars of gold, where they safely arrive, and leave the old Dutchman to return and hunt his gold at his leisure; and, finally, in the fall of 1827, he goes again to Harmony; Harris makes his appearance there, and the work of translating the new bible goes on. This is the first time his father-in-law ever heard of the golden plates; and it seems to be Smith's first effort at translating them.

The point to be noticed here is, that, from 1823 to 1827, the precise four years in which Smith and his friends, in all the Mormon journals, either by accident or design, omit all accounts of him, he is passing to and fro from his native place to Chenango county, N. Y., and then to Harmony, Penn., which is near by; he is seemingly out of employ, and resources, and friends; and, by his own confession, employed a part of his time in digging for a cave of silver, by Stowell. He was, therefore, in the society of men not only ready to believe, but on the look-out for wonders and sudden speculations.

Why have neither Smith nor his friends given any history of these four years, between the two miraculous visits of the angel, viz, from Sept. 22, 1823, to Sept. 22, 1827, when he first obtained the plates? Why does Smith pass over this most interesting portion of his life in silence, or speak of it only in vague generalities? The only possible answer is, he dares not give a minute and detailed history of that period, giving places and dates; for if he should, he fears it would lead to his detection. No other reason can be given, though he may patch up something after these suggestions.

We will now advert to the history of the famous Spaulding manuscript, of which so much has been said, and which many suppose forms the plot of this contemptible religious comedy, expanded, revised, and mutilated no doubt as the genius of Smith directed.

Mr. John Spaulding, brother of Solomon, of Crawford county, Penn., testifies as follows:

"Solomon Spaulding was born in Ashford, Conn., in 1761. He graduated at Dartmouth College, and was afterwards regularly ordained as a minister. After preaching three or four years he gave it up, and commenced mercantile business with his brother Josiah, in Cherry Valley, N. Y., where he failed in business, and, in 1809, removed to Conneaut, Ohio. I made him a visit about four years after, and found him involved in debt. He then told me he had been writing a book which he intended to have printed, the avails of which he thought would enable him to pay all his debts. The book was entitled the 'Manuscript Found,' of which he read to me many passages. It was an historical romance of the first settlers of America, endeavoring to show that the American Indians are the descendants of the Jews, or the lost tribes. It gave a detailed account of their journey from Jerusalem, by land and sea, till they arrived in America, under the command of Nephi and Lehi. They afterwards had quarrels and contentions, and separated into two distinct nations, one of which he denominated Nephites, and the other Lamanites. Cruel and bloody wars ensued, in which great multitudes were slain. They buried their dead in large heaps, which caused the mounds so common in this country. Their arts, sciences, and civilization were brought into view, in order to account for all the curious antiquities found in various parts of North and South America. I have recently read the Book of Mormon, and to my great surprise I find nearly the same historical matter, names, &c., as they were in my brother's writing. I well remember that he wrote in the old style, and commenced about every sentence with, 'And it came to pass,' or, 'Now it came to pass,' the same as in the Book of Mormon; and, according to the best of my recollection and belief, it is the same as my brother Solomon wrote, with the *exception of the religious matter.* By what means it has fallen into the hands of Joseph Smith, jun., I am unable to determine.

Signed, JOHN SPAULDING."

Martha Spaulding, the wife of John Spaulding, also testifies as follows:

"I was personally acquainted with Solomon Spaulding about twenty years ago. I was at his house a short time before he left Conneaut. He was then writing an historical novel, founded on the first settlers of America. He represented them as an enlightened and warlike people. He had for many years contended that the aborigines of America were the descendants of some of the lost tribes of Israel; and this idea he carried out in the book in question. The names of Nephi and Lehi are yet fresh in my memory, as being the principal heroes of his tale . . . . I have read the Book of Mormon, which has brought fresh to my recollection the writings of Solomon Spaulding; and I have no manner of doubt that the historical part of it is the same that I read, and heard read, more than twenty years ago. The old obsolete style and phrases, 'And it came to pass,' are the same.

Signed, MARTHA SPAULDING."

Mr. Henry Lake, former partner of Solomon Spaulding, testifies as follows:

Conneaut, Ashtabula co., Ohio, Sept. 1833.

"I left the state of N. York late in the year 1810, and arrived in this place about the first of January following. Soon after my arrival, I formed a copartnership with Solomon Spaulding, for the purpose of rebuilding a forge which he had commenced a year or two before. He frequently read to me from a manuscript which he was writing, and which he entitled the 'Manuscript Found,' which he represented as being found in this town. I spent many hours in hearing him read said writings, and became well acquainted with its contents. He wished me to assist him in getting it printed, alleging that a book of that kind would meet with a rapid sale. This book represented the American Indians as the lost tribes, gave an account of their leaving Jerusalem, their contentions and wars, which were many and great. One time when he was reading to me the tragic account of Laban, I pointed out to him what I considered an inconsistency, which he promised to correct; but, by referring to the book of Mormon, I find, to my surprise, that it stands there, just as he read it to me then. Some months ago I borrowed a golden bible, put it into my pocket, carried it home, and thought no more of it. About a week after, my wife found the book in my coat pocket, as it hung up, and commenced reading it aloud as I lay on the bed. She had not read twenty minutes before I was astonished to find the same passages in it that Spaulding had read to me more than twenty years before, from his 'Manuscript Found.'

"Since that, I have more fully examined the said golden bible, and have no hesitation in saying that the historical part of it is principally, if not wholly, taken from the 'Manuscript Found.' I well recollect telling Mr. Spaulding that the so frequent use of the words, 'And it came to pass,' 'Now it came to pass,' rendered it ridiculous. Spaulding left here in 1812, and I furnished him with the means to carry him to Pittsburg, where he said he would get the book printed, and pay me. But I never heard any more from him or his writings till I saw them in the Book of Mormon.

Signed, HENRY LAKE."

These testimonies are confirmed by Messrs. Aaron Wright, Oliver Smith, Nahum Howard, of Ohio, Artemas Cunningham, of Geauga county, John N. Millar, of Pennsylvania, former acquaintance of Mr. Spaulding; and by other gentlemen, whose testimony it is not important to quote at length, as well as by the widow and daughter of Mr. Spaulding. The widow is now quite aged, and her daughter was but a mere child during her father's life, which has tended to render their testimony somewhat indefinite, and the Mormons say, discordant, as perhaps it is natural that it should be, in some of the details, considering the extreme age of the one and youth of the other. This the Mormons have not failed to trumpet abroad, while they have never made a single successful effort to refute the testimony of the witnesses here adduced, and numerous others of equal credibility; indeed they seem reluctant to notice them at all. But from these sources, the following facts can be fully substantiated, viz:

Mr. Spaulding wrote a manuscript, while living in Ohio, in the years 1810, '11, and '12, which he called the "Manuscript Found." It was an historical romance of the first settlers of America, endeavoring to show that the American Indians are the lost tribes, the descendants of the Jews, giving an account of their journey from Jerusalem, by land and by sea, until they arrived in America, under the command of Nephi and Lehi; in short, the leading features of the work were so similar to the historical parts of Smith's book, that numbers recognised it, as soon as they heard it, as being the same story.

In 1812, Spaulding left Ohio and went to Pittsburg, where he resided about two years; during which time it has been supposed that he left his manuscript at the printing office of Patterson & Lambdier, and that Sidney Rigdon found it there when he went to Pittsburg to live, in 1822. Of this, however, there is no proof; and I cannot imagine that a man of Rigdon's talent, power of language, and knowledge of the Bible, ever could have jumbled together such a bundle of absurdities as the Book of Mormon is. No. Whoever got the Spaulding manuscript, Joe Smith, and Joe alone, is sole "author and proprietor" of its offspring, the Book of Mormon. There is not, probably, another man on the globe that could write such a book, except Joe Smith; and he would not have done it, had not some materials been furnished to his hand to suggest the outline of his story.

Whether Rigdon helped him to the manuscript, or aided him in the work, we cannot tell. It is certain that, from 1822, he was out of business, and professed to be in Pittsburg studying the Scriptures for three years, while Smith was away from home, no one knows precisely where, except that a part of the time he was in Harmony, East Pennsylvania.

During the three years in which Smith was translating his bible, it is also certain that Rigdon was as actively engaged as he could be in building up a church for him in Ohio; whether by intrigue or accident, we will not pretend to say.

But, to resume our narrative of facts: Mr. Spaulding left Pittsburg in 1814, and removed to Amity, Washington co., Penn., where he lived two years, and died in 1816. Whether Mr. Spaulding took his manuscript with him, or whether he left it behind at Lambdier's office, in Pittsburg, his widow, now Mrs. Davidson, of Monson, Mass., is not positively certain; and the Mormons have asserted that she has told different stories about the matter, which, considering her age and infirmity of memory, is not improbable. After the death of Mr. Spaulding, she, however, removed to Onondaga co., N. Y., in 1817 or '18, where she resided about one year. This place is in the vicinity of the Smiths.

At this time she had in her possession a small trunk, containing the writings of her deceased husband, Rev. Mr. Spaulding; but of the number and character of these writings she cannot positively affirm. From this place she went to Hartwick, Otsego co., and other places in that vicinity, on a visiting tour. She married again in Hartwick, in 1820, where she resided until 1832. She then again removed to Massachusetts. During a part of the time, from 1817 to 1820, she left the said trunk at her brother's house, Mr. Harvy Sabine, at Onondaga Hollow, not very far from the Smiths, as may be seen on the map. After her marriage, in 1820, the trunk was taken to Hartwick, where she left it, in 1832, with Mr. Jerome Clark.

Hartwick is not far from the residence of the famous Stowell, in whose employ Smith dug for money, as he says, in 1823. To this place also he was passing and repassing, for four years afterwards, as we have seen, without ostensible object or business, except, as appears from the testimony of the people of Bainbridge, he was once or twice arrested as a common vagabond, and finally ran away, to escape the sentence of the law. The trunk and manuscripts were, then, in this vicinity from 1820 to 1832, and of course during the four years of Smith's life, on which he is so silent, as it regards himself. He was, in reality, loitering about these regions, as we learn from other sources.

Mrs. Davidson is not certain that the "Manuscript Found" was in said trunk; nevertheless, it was thought best to examine it; and when examined, instead of a variety of manuscripts, but one single one was found, which purported to be a short unfinished Romance, deriving the origin of the Indians from Rome, by a ship driven to the American coast, while on a voyage to Britain, before the Christian era.

This manuscript was taken and shown to several of the above-named witnesses, who say that Mr. Spaulding, at first, began his romance in this way, and wrote, as it seems, a quire or so of paper to that effect; but finally concluded to give up that plan, go further back, and derive their origin from the Jews, as in the Book of Mormon. The failure of finding this latter manuscript, I think, has been misinterpreted by both the friends and enemies of Smith.

If Mrs. Davidson had a trunk full of manuscripts in Otsego county, who took them all away but one? Why was Smith prowling about there for four years? During that time, both he and his family were telling strange stories about a book, or manuscript, that was to be found, as we shall see in the sequel. Why did he go to Harmony, Penn., to translate his book? If he really succeeded in getting the manuscript from Mrs. Spaulding's trunk, or if some one did it for him, this accounts for its disappearance, and for all other known facts in the case. That all the writings are missing, and cannot be found, with the exception of this one small romance of the later origin, is a known fact. That Mr. Spaulding wrote another and larger edition of the work, similar in all its leading features to the "more history parts" of the inspired translation of the Book of Mormon, is also certain. That it might have been taken from Pittsburg is possible; but that it was taken from the trunk in Otsego county, and finally fell into the hands of Smith, while in connection with Stowell, is far more probable. That it is gone, and that Smith had both seen and read it before his prophetic mission, is as certain as it is that the Book of Mormon exists.

If we do not admit this, we must believe that all these witnesses to its contents testify falsely, without any possible motive for so doing, while they corroborate and sustain each other in their evidence, without any possibility of collusion, and explain all known facts, even before the facts to be explained had been made public. However, be that as it may, Smith is undoubtedly the "author and proprietor" of the book, as it now stands. There are also facts to show that at first he had no idea of what would come out of the thing, and was, for a long time, beating round the bush, and trying to raise the wind in some way, he knew not precisely how. It will be recollected, that the story given at the outset of this work is the stereotyped edition, which Smith himself gave, after the appearance of the book.

Our space forbids us to quote from the affidavits of the witnesses the numberless and contradictory stories he told about the book, previous to that time. When he first heard of, or saw, this manuscript, is uncertain. His plans, however, assumed something of a definite shape in 1827.

Peter Ingersol testifies that old Smith told him, some time before this, that a book had been found in a hollow tree, in Canada, giving an account of the first settlement of this country, before it was discovered by Columbus. Joe had probably made some trial of his father's credulity previous to this time. In January, 1827, the old man told Willard Chase a somewhat improved book-story, the substance of which was, that a spirit had appeared to his son Joseph, informing him of a record on golden plates, which he could obtain by repairing to a given place, dressed in black, and riding on a black horse with a switch-tail. They fitted him out as directed. He proceeded to the place; found the box containing the plates; saw, upon opening it, the book, and attempted to get it, but was hindered. A toad, in the box, assumes the form of a man, and hits Smith a lick on the head, which knocks him three or four rods, and, finally, he was told by the spirit who wrote the book to come again, one year from that time, with his oldest brother, and he should receive the plates. Before the time arrived, however, the oldest brother died, which the old man said was an "accidental providence."

These and similar stories were evidently thrown out as bait, to try the credulity of Smith's father and his money-digging comrades. Joe had probably either got his book, or become sure that he could obtain it, and was only casting about to see what use he could make of it, or whether he could raise the wind in this way. One or two slight circumstances seem to have decided him upon the course which he ultimately pursued. But we will let him tell his own story, as he himself related it to Mr. Peter Ingersol.*

Early in the fall of this same year, 1827, says Smith, "as I was passing across some woods, I found, in a hollow, some beautiful white sand, that had been washed up by the water. I took off my frock, tied up several quarts of it, and then went home. On entering the house, I found the family at dinner, and they were all anxious to know the contents of my frock. At that moment I happened to think of what I had heard of the 'golden bible:' so I very gravely told them it was the golden bible; and, to my surprise, they were credulous enough to believe it." He added that no man could see it, with the naked eye, and live; still, he offered to take it out and show it to them; but they refused to see it, and left the room, it seems, in some fright. "Now," says Joe, "I have got the d——d fools fixed, and I will carry out the fun."

Here he first formed the idea that a golden bible would take well, and he accordingly fixed his plan.

After this, in order to keep up the humbug, he applied to Willard Chase to make a box for his bible. But, as Chase would not do it, he made a box of clapboards himself, put the sand into a pillow-case, and then into the box, which he permitted all to see and handle, but not to examine. Shortly after this, it seems, he determined to go to Pennsylvania again. As he himself told Ingersol, he went to Palmyra, and being in want of money for the journey, says he, "I there met that d——d fool, Martin Harris, and told him that I had a command from God to ask fifty dollars in money of the first man I met in the street, to assist in the work of the Lord, in translating the golden bible." "I saw," said he, "that the thing took his notion, for he promptly gave me the money."

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* See oath of P. Ingersol.

However, Harris's statement of this same transaction shows that he did not get the money without having recourse to the basest intrigue and duplicity. But he got it, as all admit.

He talked to Harris about the golden plates of immense value, and of the immense wealth that would accrue from the publication of such a new and wonderful work, and finally offered him a share in this sudden influx of wealth, if he would advance a few dollars, in order to bring forth the work. At length, by skilfully working at once upon the credulity, superstition, and avarice of Harris, he got him fairly enlisted. These two incidents seem to have decided the mind of the prophet. The story of the sand enabled him to guage the credulity of his father's family, and the others who constituted the first church of six, while the grant of the fifty dollars was a sure pledge at once of the credulity and fanaticism of Harris. He saw that, by giving the matter a religious turn, he could probably keep the Smiths and Whitmers under his thumb, pick Harris's pocket of his ten thousand dollars, more or less, and perhaps even turn it to account after that, by the sale of books, or otherwise. At this time it was solely and avowedly a money-making matter, with all who were engaged in it, save the dupes in the play, and even some of them entertained hopes of pecuniary gain, as all the affidavits show. With these prospects ahead, Smith starts off to Pennsylvania again, although it was but a few months since he moved his family from that state, and Harris soon followed. Whether Smith went down there to get the manuscript, or only to translate it more at his leisure, or both of these, it is not certain; but he goes and translates, or pretends to translate, and Harris writes for a time, until the devil begins to bother them, and then Cowdery appears on the stage, and acts as scribe. His first pretended verbal revelation, that has been made public, was given in Harmony, July, 1828,* after Martin had lost the manuscript of one hundred and sixteen pages. From that time on, revelations seem to have been frequently necessary, both to keep up the courage of the scribes, Harris and Cowdery, and also to prepare the minds of the dupes who were to constitute the first Mormon church in New York.

In these revelations, Smith committed himself upon many points, which he has been obliged to alter in the subsequent editions, showing clearly that he had no idea whereunto the thing would grow. But after his fortunate union with Rigdon, as has been related, his scheme at once expanded, and assumed a form and reach which rendered it indespensable to alter, mutilate, and add to, the first revelations frequently, as occasion required.

It is evident that, as early as 1822, Smith began to dabble with his stone spectacles. Some time previous to June, 1827, he had probably got some idea of the Spaulding manuscript, and was practising his wits upon the old man and others, to see what he could do with it. In August, Smith and his wife went to Pennsylvania, with Peter Ingersol, to bring their goods up to Manchester, to which place they soon returned. Soon after his arrival there, he found the curious sand, succeeded in duping his father's family, (who, with one Joseph Knight, constituted his future church,) got his fifty dollars (which fixed him in his plan of calling it the "Golden Bible,") from Harris, applied for his box, and finally made a rough one himself, returned to Pennsylvania to secure the manuscript, and addressed himself to the task of translating it.

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* See Book of Cov., 156.

He might have had the manuscript before, however, though he told several persons that he had none, and was only hoaxing the "d—d fools;" still, he told as many more that he had got it; and if he had not, we may reasonably conclude he knew where he could get it, on his return to Pennsylvania.

I will here adopt the Mormon mode of arguing on the prophecies, and inquire, If this is not a true account of the whole matter, what is? Let Smith or his friends give us the full and accurate history of his life, during these four years, with names of places, persons, and dates, where, with whom, and in what manner Smith was employed during that whole period, and then, if the public are not satisfied, it will at least remove the suspicion which must necessarily attach to such obvious and ominous silence. Let him show that the story which he now tells was not one made up, piecemeal, after the publication of the book, and that, too, in utter contrariety to scores of stories before told by Smith himself. It might not be amiss, also, for Rigdon to give a more accurate account of his whereabouts, from 1823 to 1830, that the public might the better understand the philosophy of his new theology in Ohio, while Smith was receiving new revelations in New-York. It is certainly curious, that after a three years' tug in Ohio, at reformation in the church, Pratt stumbles at once upon Smith's book in New-York. The "four elders" sent on a mission to the Indians stumble, in like manner, upon Rigdon in Ohio, and there they all stumble together upon a whole society—some 1000 persons—all prepared for the new gospel; and so the whole posse, Rigdon and all, at once set to crying, and snivelling, and baptizing into this new, and wonderful, and unheard-of faith of Joe Smith!

These things look curious, certainly; and if they were merely a series of accidents, as perhaps they may have been, surely they were a succession of "accidental providences," almost as singular as the untimely death of the oldest brother of Joe, whom the Lord first appointed to aid Joe in the procuring the plates, but whom he took, by accident, as the old man said, before the time arrived. Perhaps, however, the devil stole him, as he did the 116 pages of manuscript. And it may be that all these particular providences, which resulted in the union of Rigdon and Pratt, and the consequent elevation of Joe, with his faith and book, from merited contempt, were, in fact, the devil's providences; for since, according to Smith's own showing, he was the means of securing to the Mormons a better revelation than they otherwise would have had, he may have had a hand in fostering the infant church which was its offspring.

The world would like to understand all this a little better than either Rigdon or Pratt have enabled them, as yet, to comprehend it. It may be hard to impeach men's motives, but it is still harder for any man to believe that men, who can write and speak with as much readiness as Rigdon and Pratt, ever did, or ever could, honestly believe one word of Smith's stories, or of the budget of lying, nonsensical gibberish, which he has the impudence to call a revelation from God.

The origin of the book is, however, after all, a matter of mere curiosity, of little practical moment. We have the book. It speaks for itself; and whether it was concocted in a sunbeam, or in the mud, it is neither worthy of man nor Deity. It is worthy of only Joe Smith; and if he originated the whole of it, without any foreign aid, we could only say, "Like parent, like child," and let it go at that.

If he is the author and proprietor, as he says he is, be it so; no one objects; and were it not for proof positive, as it regards its similarity to the Spaulding manuscript, there would be not the least possible necessity of looking beyond the cranium of Joe Smith for the nest in which it was brooded, hatched, and fledged. A greater genius could not have written it as it now is—a lesser one could not have written it worse. Some have intimated that Smith was aided by the devil; but surely not in the composition of the work. We must excuse his Satanic Majesty from all hand in it, save a commendable effort, by stealing away the 116 pages of manuscript, to save his minions from probable disgrace, and his cause on earth from utter contempt and ruin. I doubt not the devil stole it simply from a sense of propriety; but after he was so triumphantly outwitted by Smith's guardian genius, he took a sudden tack, as he is wont to do, and tried to see how many folks he could make believe it. He has, by the aid of Rigdon and Pratt, succeeded in this to admiration; though he seems to have become somewhat ashamed of this last move, and took again a counter track in 1838, in Missouri. What his next evolution may be, none but the prophet Smith can tell. Even the Mormons, however, have sense enough to see that Smith must, by some means, regain his Mount Zion in Missouri, or that he will prove himself an impostor even to them. Dissenters affirm that this is now the great enterprise before the secret councils of Smith.

CHAPTER VII.

ORGANIZATION AND DOCTRINES OF THE MORMONS.

The two priesthoods—First presidency, &c.—Powers of Smith—Number of Dignitaries—Doctrines of faith—Trinity—Mormon sacrifice of all things—Miracles—Gifts of healing, prophets, &c.—Casting out devils—Hierarchy—Witness of the Spirit—Equality with God—Pre-existence—Preaching—Creeds—Real belief of Mormons—Suppressed and altered revelations—Patriarchal blessings.

THE "Latter Day Saints" have two distinct classes of arguments, which they advance in their own behalf: One class is to prove the divine authority of Smith's book, the other to show the necessity and superiority of the peculiar organization, doctrines, and discipline of their church.

The apostolic and democratic simplicity of their church government will first claim our attention.

They have two distinct orders of church dignitaries: 1. The MELCHIZEDEC, or High Priesthood, consisting of high-priests and elders: 2. The AARONIC, or Lesser Priesthood, consisting of bishops, priests, teachers, and deacons. The former preside over the spiritual interests of the church. The latter administer its ordinances, and manage its temporal concerns.

Three of the Melchizedec or High Priests are appointed presidents, to preside over all the churches in all the world. They are called the *First Presidency.*

The church in Jackson county, Mo., is called "Zion," and is *still to become* the great centre, both of gathering and of ruling; at least so says Smith's divinity. Gov. Boggs seems to be of a different opinion. Which knows best, it is hard to say.

Other churches, established by revelations given to Smith, are called "Stakes of Zion," or simply "stakes." Hence the *stakes* at Kirtland, Nauvoo, &c.

Each of these stakes, also, is ruled by a subordinate presidency, of three high-priests, whose jurisdiction is confined to the limits of the stake.

The divine appointment of these stakes, in new regions, gives a fine opportunity of speculating in town lots.

They have also a High Council, consisting of twelve high-priests, and constituting the court of ultimate appeal, at each stake. The bishop and his two counsellors, from the lesser priesthood, constitute the court of immediate jurisdiction, for the first trial of transgressors, and for administering things temporal at each stake.

A travelling high council, consisting also of twelve high priests, and called the "*Twelve Apostles*," are sent forth with power to preach the gospel to all the world, and to discipline and govern all unorganized churches. One of these is called "President of the Twelve."

The first, second, and third "Seventies," consisted of seventy elders each, whose duty it was to preach the Mormon gospel abroad, under the direction of the twelve apostles.

In addition to these dignitaries, there is an innumerable host of bishops, elders, priests, deacons, &c., employed by the church, either to edify the "saints" at home, or to gain proselytes abroad. Each of these furnishes himself with the Book of Covenants and Pratt's Voice of Warning, from which they are soon able to acquire at once their proof-texts, their logic, and their faith.

The first presidency, the high council, and each of the seventies, have the right to discipline their own members, within their respective limits, and a decision of either body is final, and reversible only at the general council of all the bodies conjointly.

The high priests, elders, and priests, travel and preach; but teachers and deacons are the stationary officers of the church.

All these functionaries are created, and, according to the doctrine and teaching of Smith, can be removed at any time by the voice of their constituents, the people.

All this is so purely and beautifully democratic, that the saints seem to forget that their democratic monarch, Smith, has reserved exclusively to himself the sole right of receiving and promulgating revelations from the Lord, touching even the most minute of all the interests of the church, to which, of course, they are ever to yield the most implicit obedience, on penalty of eternal damnation. Hence—though, as Smith tells them, all these functionaries are merely their servants—Joe Smith himself is virtually the God both of them and their servants, for his voice is the voice of God, in all things, great and small, whenever he chooses to call it so; and that, too, in spite of the command of God, given March, 1829, and found in the Book of Covenants, 158. By turning to that same revelation, as it stands on the tenth page of the first edition of the Book of Commandments, published in 1833, before the prophet saw fully what powers it would be convenient for him to assume in the church, the reader will see that, at the end of the second verse, God commands Smith to pretend to "*no other gift*" except to translate, and expressly declares that he will "*grant him no other gift.*" Doubtless the prophet thought this sufficient at the time. But, in publishing the second edition, two years after, it was found expedient to add a saving clause or two, so as effectually to annihilate at once the command and the promise, and leave Smith still free to usurp whatever power he pleased. The second edition is made to read thus: "I have commanded that you should pretend to no other gift" (save to translate) "*until my purpose is fulfilled in this,*" "for I will grant you no other gift *until it is finished.*" The words in italics are interpolated in the second edition, but not found in the first. Doubtless this was a mere correction of the type, like the taking away of a whole page of the preface from the second edition of the Book of Mormon. Smith did not see the necessity of correcting the type in '33, but in '35 it became apparent. The power of a simple translator was too narrow for the exigency of the times. It would have been well for the world if Smith's divinity, instead of giving him a pair of stone spectacles, had given him a divine printer, and a divine press, and such types that he might have been enabled to fix the meaning of his inspired revelations, so that it would be possible to let them stand, at *least two years*, without abstracting, interpolating, altering, or garbling, to suit the times. But the ways of Smith's providence are indeed mysterious. We will not pretend to judge. The prophet needed other gifts, and he took them; not by piecemeal, but by wholesale; or rather, he had already taken them before.

In a revelation given to Smith, April 6, 1830, the very day the first Mormon church of six was organized at Fayette, New York,* Smith is appointed "*Seer*, *Translator*, *Prophet*, *Apostle* of Jesus Christ, and *Elder* of the church, through the will of God, the Father, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ." He is also declared to be "inspired of the Holy Ghost, to lay the foundation of the church, and build it up in the most holy faith;" and the church is commanded to keep a *perpetual record* of these titles.

"Wherefore, the church shall give heed to *all his words and commandments*, which he shall give unto you: for his word shall ye receive, as if from mine own mouth, in all patience and faith." Again, on page 88, the first president is to preside over the whole church, and be like unto Moses, to be a *seer*, *revelator*, *translator*, *prophet*, having *all the gifts* which God bestows upon the *head of the church*.

These are the moderate qualifications, indispensable, in order to be even a candidate for the office of first president of the Mormon church. But, in a revelation given February, 1831, page 126, Smith's divinity confers on him not only the *exclusive* right to receive and give forth commandments from the Lord, but also power to appoint his successor; and the church are commanded to "uphold him, to appoint him, to provide him food and raiment, and *whatsoever things* he needeth to accomplish his work," with threats for disobedience as usual. Hence, none but Smith, or his appointed successor, can ever be elected to stand at the head of the church, without direct disobedience and rebellion against the Mormon god, that is, Joe Smith.

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* B. C., 177.

In a revelation of September, 1831, page 145, all Smith's dignities and titles are conferred on him for life. True, he may be removed for misconduct; but who is to judge? The Lord, surely; but by whose mouth? By the mouth of his servant, Joseph Smith! This is first-rate democracy, to say nothing of apostolic humility and simplicity.

In a revelation, page 111, the world is informed of what they very well knew before, that Joe Smith "*had no strength to work*," though he is one of the best wrestlers in the county. Therefore, the churches are commanded to support him, with the usual benedictions and cursings. See also Book of Commandments, 181, where the church are commanded to obey him, even as Aaron. By comparing also the revelation on page 214 with the "Times and Seasons," vol. ii., No. 7, pages 305 and 307, the reader will see that Smith has the power of holding the keys of the kingdom of God forever, and that this is only the modest power of eternal salvation or damnation over the flock, the same as is arrogated by the spiritual descendant of St. Peter at Rome, and is to be perpetuated to the spiritual descendants of brother Jose, the democratic general at Nauvoo.

So much for the beautiful symmetry, simplicity, and freedom of Mormon democracy, and the admirable consistency, humility, patience and self-denial of their servant, the Prophet Joseph Smith, jr., General of Nauvoo militia, and head of the church throughout the earth.

According to reports from England, it appears that they there have about one church dignitary, of some sort, to every ten private members. In the early history of the church in this country, the proportion was much greater. Here lies the secret of their success; every thing in the shape of a man, that can walk and carry his catechisms, is forthwith dubbed high priest, elder, or apostle, (or something large,) and sent forth to trudge and beg, with a single comrade, in quest of adventure and proselytes. This arrangement operates at once as a motive and a means of conquest. Every ejected or discontented dunce, in other denominations, feels sure that, if he joins the Mormons, he shall be dubbed a knight of the altar, and may in turn trudge forth in quest of new apostles, until perchance he tires in his new labors, or fails of his full share of blushing honors, doffs the badges of the apostle for the sackcloth of the apostate, and yields up his faith in Joe Smith for faith in nothing save his own folly and delusion.

We will next consider some of the fundamental doctrines of the church.

1. *The nature of faith.* Their doctrines, on this fundamental item of all religion, may be seen at large in the first part of the Book of Covenants. There can be no doubt that faith, or rational belief, in things not seen, is the foundation of all power, all energy, all efficiency, and all good, temporal and eternal, so far as man is concerned. But when we are referred to Heb. xi. 3, to prove that faith enabled God to create the world, it shocks all reason, and all common sense. The apostle tells us that *we understand it* through faith, not that God *created the world* through faith.

Most will admit also, that it is probable that the first idea of a Supreme Being has travelled down from Adam, to whom it was given by direct revelation.

But does it follow from this, that our belief in a Supreme Being rests, either in whole or in part, on mere human testimony? Doubtless our parents first suggested to our minds the idea of a supreme Divinity. But with the heavens over our heads, and the earth under our feet, all declaring and demonstrating his being, and glory, and power, do we still believe it on the bare ground of human testimony? If so, we must be dolts indeed. This is as though one should maintain that his belief in the existence of the sun rested on human testimony, because, forsooth, his father happened first to point it out to him.

The writer next proceeds to show, that we also come to the knowledge of the moral attributes of God by revelations made to men, which we receive on the mere ground of human testimony. This is like believing that the sun is warm, because our grandfathers sat under his beams and have told us so. Suppose that we found, from our own actual individual experience, that God was, in all possible ways, constantly endeavoring to deceive and torment us, instead of endeavoring to do us good, hour by hour, and day by day, should we, forsooth, in that case, believe that he was wise, and good, and holy, because he had condescended to tell our grandfathers so? No;—we believe that God is good, not on human testimony, nor yet on his own testimony, for we must first *know* that he is good, before we can rationally believe a word he says. But we believe that he is good, because we observe and experience the results of his goodness in our own persons every hour of our lives.

We have been more explicit in our remarks on the first four lectures on faith, because we perceive here a sort of entering wedge to the whole system of Mormonism. The absurd and contemptible sophisms, in these four chapters on faith, are intended to lie as an immoveable foundation to the whole system. Hence, by a sort of logical agony, the profound effort was made, by beginning away back at the creation, with the fundamental idea of a first cause, and gradually and carefully creeping along up, with their new doctrine of faith, through all the divine attributes, to the sublime conclusion, that all religious faith does and must, from the very nature of things, rest on the contemptible foundation of *mere human testimony.* But the final end, the inevitable conclusion, from all this jesuitical sophistry, is cautiously and prudently suppressed, until a more suitable opportunity for its development. We think it a good time now to drag this detestable inference forth from its hiding place, and to present the whole syllogism in broad daylight, where all men may at once both see and detest, not only the sophism, but the meanness of its authors. It is this. All faith, even in a Supreme Being, rests of necessity on mere human testimony for its foundation. Ergo, (now comes the real inference meanly suppressed,) therefore you MUST BELIEVE IN JOE SMITH, Martin Harris, Oliver Cowdery, and David Whitmer, or whatever other "knaves, dupes or debauchees" choose to draw on a long face and come to you in the name of the Lord.

This is the sublime logic of the first four chapters on faith!! And the knavery and hypocrisy of omitting the necessary, inevitable, and *intended* inference from the whole, are surely not the least detestable parts of the effort.

We believe neither in God, nor in his attributes, nor in any part or portion of divine revelation, on the ground of mere human testimony, and we never shall so long as we retain our common sense; but we believe in all these on much higher ground than the mere conjoint testimony of even the whole human race, as has been shown.

Much less shall we believe in the testimony of those whom this professed prophet of the Lord himself has pronounced "liars, debauchees, and asses." Nor shall we believe in the lying, money-digging, drunken deceiver, who duped them to give their testimony to such contemptible gibberish as the Book of Mormon.

The reader will pardon our extended notice of this puerile doctrine of faith. It is not worth discussing, I am well aware, but I had the edification of the saints in view. Besides it is fundamental in Mormonism, as well as in some other fanaticisms.

The fourth lecture on faith treats of the Trinity, or rather of the duality, as they explain it. We commend it to the careful perusal of those who think they can understand and explain the precise mode in which the Supreme Intelligence of the universe exists, as readily as they can the properties of an ellipse or a triangle, and who are enabled to expound and adjust all the powers and relations of the Trinity, with the same facility that they can the various compartments of an hour-glass.

We presume a criticism on this paragraph of Mormon faith, from such exalted geniuses, who, by the mystic aid of "substances" and "essences," are enabled to solve what angels cannot comprehend, would be amusing, if not important to the public. We leave it to them.

In the sixth lecture on faith, the proposition is announced and maintained, that men know their acceptance with God "only through the medium of the sacrifice of all earthly things." Verse 7.

In the first place, we would inquire, What is meant by "the sacrifice of all earthly things," if our eternal reward is to consist in similar things—eternal cities, eternal gold, and eternal farms, instead of temporal cities, gold, and farms? Again: Are these sacrifices of all worldly things to be made at the bidding of Joe Smith and his counsellors? Are we to yield them up to God through their hands, or are we not?

The language of these exhortations would be well enough, were they not in known connection with the ends and aims of Smith and his comrades. But as it is, the plain meaning is this: You must give up all worldly things to God, as an indispensable condition of salvation. Very well—agreed. But who is to inform us of what things God has need? Why, the Lord's prophet at Nauvoo, to be sure. And to whom are we to pay it over? To the Lord's servants at Nauvoo. *All* our wealth, according to the first edition of the Book of Covenants, and *part* of it only, according to the second edition. Very well. All this is nice. We think we will take our chance of salvation on some other ground.

This lecture on the sacrifice of all things, we are informed, is so plain, that the customary catechism upon it at the end is deemed unnecessary. We have supplied one, with appropriate answers, which we would respectfully commend to the "saints," to be appended to the next edition of this plausible lecture. It would constitute a better typographical correction than the prophet is wont to make in his revelations, even where he adds whole pages to the original text. The student is also advised, by the Mormons, to commit the whole lecture to memory; it is so important. We advise him to do the same, and to take our catechism with it, since the prophet has supplied none. The concluding, seventh lecture on faith, we would also commend to theological mystics and system-mongers of all creeds. Faith here is made to mount up into regions where they delight to soar. We fear we should fall from the giddy height. We choose, then, to stand on terra firma, and stretch up our necks, to see how other geese rise and fly through these aerial heights.

We have already noticed the fundamental dogma and final exhortation of Mormonism, and of all other spurious creeds, viz—You must believe on mere human testimony, and then give all you have to God's appointed *witnesses of the faith;* we have dragged them forth from their lurking-places by the incipient catechism on faith, and that is all we can do at present.

The next move of the Mormons, after having thus got a firm foothold upon the credulity of their followers, is to remove one insuperable objection to their scheme—viz, utter want of all accredited or rational evidence that it is from God. This they do, by denying that the miracles of the Bible were wrought of old by God, in attestation of the veracity of his servants, before the world; but they affirm, that they were wrought simply for the benefit of those who believe, or the saints.

To prove this, instead of taking the Bible literally, where Moses is said to have wrought signs to show that he was commissioned of God, and also in John, x.

37, xv. 24, Acts, ii. 3, and numberless other passages, on almost every page of the Bible, where even Christ himself is represented as commanding the Jews not to take him at his word, but to look at his works, or miracles, because "he that beareth witness of himself is not true;" all these they virtually deny, or contradict, and then tell us that they take them literally. Still, they contend that there can be no true church on earth, without prophets, apostles, power of miracles, gifts of tongues, of healing, etc., etc., and that their church alone possesses these.

These extravagant dogmas and absurd claims, common to all impostors, in all ages, they base on the following passages of Scripture. It is said in Mark, xvi. 17, "These signs shall follow them that believe," (enumerating the signs.) They fall into a mistake here, which is common to them and all other fanatics, viz, that of understanding all that was said by Christ and his apostles *to their hearers*, as of course said to them. Hence they infer, that these signs were to follow, not only those who believed on the twelve apostles, as the text literally asserts, and as was the case at the day of Pentecost, and on various other occasions, but, forsooth, they maintain that these signs were to follow *all those* who should afterwards believe the *gospel*, in *all ages of the world*, which the text does not assert. This they call a *literal* interpretation. But when we grant them this position, and say, Very well, bravo! now show us the signs, and we will believe; their ready reply is, "A wicked and adulterous generation seeketh for a sign, and verily there shall no sign be given them;" and here they stop, forgetting to refer us to any past or future sign, as the Saviour referred those whom he rebuked in this passage, because they had before refused to look at the multitude of signs he had already given them.

And now, for a long time, the teeth of the Mormons have been chattering with the ague, induced by the trials of poverty and want, which have been brought upon them by their frequent removals from place to place, and the stone temple, bank stock, mercantile, prairie land, and tavern-house speculations of the Lord's prophet and his compeers; and their teeth still chatter, and their bones still burn and ache, though they alone, of all others, possess the miraculous gifts of healing, given, as we are assured, for the express purpose of comforting the saints on earth, and for no other purpose.

But all this, we are told, is because, forsooth, after ten years' trial, they cannot bring their faith up to the sticking-point necessary to cure this ague. And yet we are told, that sometimes they achieve wonders with the hysterics and the "blues," which we believe are the only kind of devils they have ever succeeded in casting out.

We are assured, also, that there can be no church, without prophets and apostles. We ask them to prophesy; and the prophet, in 1831, points us to the destruction which awaits the Mormons, in the Eastern country, and withdraws them from impending ruin to Mount Zion, Jackson county, Missouri, the *everlasting possession* of the saints, the fairie land of Mormon faith, Mormon peace, and Mormon bliss.*

We ask them, Whom did the apostles appoint as their successors in their apostleship, and whether it was not their fault that the office ended with them? The Mormons make no reply.

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* See B. C., p. 151, 12; p. 190, 2; p. 192, 1; p. 194, 9; p. 139, 11, 12, 13; p. 154, 1, 2.

Again, we ask, Who is empowered to revive the long-lost succession? All caps are thrown up, and all voices at once shout, "Joe Smith! Joe Smith!! He is the Prophet of the Lord!" He holds both the keys and the cash of the church, though, as we have seen, he once, in time of danger, committed the sword to his favorite mastiff.

To cap the climax of these absurdities, Parley Pratt contends, that the general commission referred to in Mark, to preach the gospel, was limited to those who heard it, while the many signs that were to follow are granted to all coming generations!! So that, while we must all wait for a new revelation to preach, we all have liberty to cast out devils as soon as we believe!!* I hope he will not complain that I have omitted the former, and am trying my hand at the latter.

They next refer to I. Cor., xii., which they expound with marvellous ability.

From the rear of this invaluable breastwork of logic, Parley opens an inspired cannonade of commingled metaphysics, eloquence, and pathos, and concludes with the prayer, "that the vision should be shut up;" in which prayer all men of common sense, I presume, will heartily unite. So here we drop it.

I would just suggest, that he and all other Mormons have forgotten to read and interpret, literally, the apostle's argument through, to the end of the 13th chapter of I. Corinthians. They are particularly silent upon that verse in which the apostle says, literally, that prophecies shall fail, and tongues shall cease, and all else but faith, (not Mormon faith, we presume,) hope, and charity.

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* See Voice of Warning, p. 112.

The outlines of their despotic hierarchy have already been presented. The names indeed of their several orders and offices are found in the Scriptures. But that the name is nothing, and the powers of an office every thing, some other apostolic sects would do well to learn, as well as the Mormons. We look in vain for the origin of the definite powers of such hierarchies, baptized with scripture names, except in the crania of their respective godfathers. In this case, Joseph Smith, jun., General of Nauvoo Militia, happens to be the man.

The system also establishes a somewhat more perfect despotism than has been reached by any other hierarchy. It concentrates all power in the person of the valorous translator. This is the principal difference between the Joe Smith of Illinois, and other Joe Smiths who have trodden the path of hierarchal fame before him. They one and all, from Pope Linus downward, demonstrate the divine origin of their religious oligarchies from Scripture, because, forsooth, the names with which they have chosen to christen their several functionaries are found in that sacred volume. The progress which Joseph has made in the Divine favor, since the typographical correction of that unlucky revelation, "Thou shalt aspire to no other gift, save to translate," may be seen from an enumeration of his accumulating titles in the Book of Covenants, 177 and 88, also at the close of the former.

The next chapter on the fundamental doctrines of Mormonism, which we shall notice, is "the witness of the Spirit," as they term it. This is always the last resort. After running the whole round of argument, discussing the merits of Joseph's bough, and its literal leap across the wall of the Atlantic ocean; glancing at the upspringing truth and downlooking righteousness of David; brandishing, with triumphant flourishes, the two sticks of Ezekiel; gazing at the angel flying away with the Book of Mormon; and having appealed to Mark's limited charter for preaching the gospel, and general permission to cast out devils, there is a solemn pause. You ask for a sign; but verily no sign shall be given you. You demand proof; the ready reply is—"I know that Mormonism is true, for God has revealed it to me, in my soul." Very good; but how shall I know it? "Ask in faith, as I have done, and it shall be given you." That is, first believe it, then ask, and then you shall know it is true. To require this process is much the same as to require one to eat his dinner raw, and to cook it afterwards.

By this patent mode of procedure, both Pratt and Rigdon assure us that they discovered ultimately that what they had at first pronounced a base fabrication, was indeed a new and wonderful revelation from God. It should be noticed here, that asking in faith, according to the Book of Covenants, is actual believing, for "where doubt and uncertainty is," say they, "there faith is not, nor can be."* Doubtless any one might discover the truth of any thing in the same way.

The fanatical doctrine of the spirit is more fully discussed upon another page.* We only repeat here, that the man who neglects the employment of the written word, natural reason, and conscience, which God has given him for his guidance, and yields himself up to his own internal impulses and phantasies, from that moment throws himself out from under the guidance of God, and yields himself up to the guidance of darkness and delusion. And the spirit of darkness will not be slow to instruct and guide him in whatever way he sees fit. He will soon know with dogmatical assurance every thing in the universe, save one, viz, that he himself has become a religious lunatic, bereft of all common sense.

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* B. C. 62. 12.

I have reserved one choice specimen of "Mormon logic and literal interpretation of the Scriptures," with which to grace the climax of this Mormon Babel. I have done this, partly because it holds and deserves the highest place in the system, and partly because I wish so to hold it up, that all men may look at this hideous and blasphemous abortion of all scripture, all reason, all decency, and all sense.

Christ prayed, say they, that all the saints might be one with him and the Father. He has declared also that they are joint heirs with him, and shall sit down with him on his throne, as he has overcome and sat down with the Father on his throne; that to those that believe, all things are possible, &c. Now what logical, literal, and inspired inference, are we to make from this? Why, truly, nothing else than that the saints are all to become equal with God himself!! In knowledge, and power, and glory, equal to the Father!! But this is not all; Christ assured his disciples, that they should do even greater things than these. Therefore, say they, we shall create, uphold, redeem, save, and reign for ever, over still greater worlds than this which Christ governs ! !*

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* See p. 115–116.

This is almost as literal as the bough and the wall, the two sticks, and the flying angel. What part the "liars, knaves, swindlers, debauchees, and asses" (who bore witness to, and constitute the foundation of the Book of Mormon, and on whose shoulders the whole superstructure rests,) are to have in these displays of Mormon glory, we are not definitely told. But since, according to Mormon doctrine, they have been the principal means of turning many to righteousness, doubtless they will shine as stars somewhere in this new firmament of gods, higher than the Highest.

Surely, when this notable day shall come, all things will be created new, with a vengeance ! ! We see here what it is that inspires the ardor and inflates the zeal of the idiot multitude of that professed church. They are to possess the fulness and wealth of the earth here, and reign with Christ in Mount Zion, Missouri, a thousand years, and hereafter they are to become, not demigods, but literal deities, one and all of them. Why then talk about sacrifices? They can afford to empty their pockets into the coffers of Smith and Company, and to traverse the world, barefoot, in quest of new Zions and new proselytes, with such a splendid reversion in prospect.

But every Mormon is not only to be a god hereafter; he has, in his own belief, been a demigod from all eternity, or at least an angel heretofore.

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* See Pratt's Truth Vindicated, p. 27.

Their sublime faith teaches them that their action and destiny here are the result, and can be explained only upon the admission, of their existence and action before they inhabited their present bodies. This notion, however, does not distinctly appear in their published revelations. It was at one time promulgated, but from its unpopularity, their leaders suppressed the full developement of their peculiar scheme of pre-existence until faith on the earth should increase.*

These general theories of humanity enable them, as they think, to give a full and literal interpretation to the language of Scripture, which, without these enlarged views, as they call them, of the origin and destiny of man, are utterly inexplicable. Reader, remember that when you meet a full-blooded Mormon, you meet an angel that *was*, a Mormon that *is*, and a God that IS TO BE. As in the case of the man who fell down stairs, and ran up again, you will find the lowest point in the climax in the middle of his career.

Probably, however, not one Mormon in fifty knows what is really taught in their own sacred books. In preaching and writing creeds in new places they do not generally even allude to the peculiarities of Mormonism as such. They take their texts, and preach a somewhat peculiar form of Christianity, which, in truth, is as much like the Mormonism at Nauvoo, as it is like paganism, and no more so. This, at first, they call *Mormonism*. But the doctrines of their sacred books and teachers are quite another thing. Every believer, either in Smith or the Book of Mormon, must believe that that book and the Book of Covenants, or revelations to Smith, are on a level with the Bible, and that all who thus receive them will be saved, and that all others will be damned.*

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* B. C., 211, 115.

2. They believe the Bible only as Smith interprets and explains, or new translates and supplies the lost parts.†

3. They believe in four different future states: the celestial, telestial, terrestrial, and the lake of fire.‡

If the reader has doubts on any of these points, he is requested to compare the pages and passages cited in proof with care.

4. Their literal interpretation of Scripture not only involves giving to the Deity a human form, and implements of human enterprise, but also the literal future levelling of mountains, annihilating seas, and bringing the whole earth into one vast plain, without weeds, thorns, briers, or any useless or hurtful thing—all as neat and as smooth as the head of a pair of brass andirons; and it is to be smelted and polished into shape much in the same way.

5. The Book of Covenants and Revelations, as it is called, which is the real basis of the practical faith of the Mormons, contains only a small part of the revelations that have actually been given to Smith, as he pretends. There is still a large folio of unpublished revelations of many hundreds, which it would be indiscreet to expose to the rude gaze of unbelievers, but which a Mormon is really bound to believe and obey wherever he meets them, or else believe that Smith, to whom

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* In proof of this, see B. C, pages 77, 74, 180, 159, 78, 75, 93, 95, 104, 113, 23, 250, 174, 175, 176, 189, in order.

† B. C. 7, 16, 111; B. M. 30, 31, first edition; B. C. 76, 117, 166.

‡ B. C. 225.

they are given, is an impostor: for he has declared them all to be from God, and printed only so many of them as he deemed prudent. Some of those not published occasionally meet us, through either the indiscretion of the brethren or the kindness of seceders.

The revelations in the Book of Covenants cannot be understood without carefully comparing them with the history and position of the Mormon church at the time they were given. The transfers of town-lots, tan-yards, &c. &c., to Smith and Company, by express revelation, are also artfully concealed by the use of antiquated, fictitious names, both for the persons and the property. It should also be remembered that revelations, said to be given to others, are always given through Smith, who is sole translator, and who, according to one revelation, aspires to no other gift,* but, according to another, claims all gifts and all authority.

In 1833, an edition of these revelations was published, in the order of their dates, and called the "Book of Commandments," with explanatory captions at the head of each revelation. That edition has been wisely suppressed. It was quite too luminous for Mormonism. In 1835, the present book came forth, with the type, &c., corrected. The captions are left out, and the revelations are scattered here and there, without any order of time or date. It now takes a *Mormon* to hunt them out, and compare them with facts in their history. Nor is this all; whole clauses, sections, and, in some cases, almost entire pages are either added or suppressed, as new exigencies required, in these said divine revelations. Let not the pious "saint" complain of this. It is the duty of his prophet to see that the revelations are corrected, from time to time. The disciple has nothing to do but to believe.

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* B. C. 126.

When old Mr. Smith, the father of Joe, was alive, he, among the rest, needed something to do. He was consequently dubbed patriarch, and it was his duty to pronounce a patriarchal blessing, in the name of Jesus Christ, on the head of all the fatherless children in the Mormon church. He had a wonderful gift of *prophecy*, which, like a cider-barrel tapped at both ends, spun out both towards the past and the future. He *predicted* to these sons of the church both their pedigree and their destiny; told them what particular tribe of Israel they were from, and what their future career would be, in this world and the next.

Several of these patriarchal blessings have fallen into our hands. They are all much the same thing. He usually first gave them their pedigree, then stimulated their vanity, poulticed their hopes, and blistered their fears, according to the best of his ability. We will give one as a specimen, which was given to Mr. Harris, whom Smith first plundered of his property, and whose character he has since attempted to destroy. He was, for one time, through seven years, a preacher of Mormonism, but, in common with many others, his eyes were at last opened, and he is now one of their most laborious and successful opponents. And it may be remarked, that now the blessings promised to *his obedience* really begin to flow in upon him. He seemed really to be laboring under a curse from heaven until he began publicly to lecture against Mormonism and the Mormons.

A PATRIARCHAL BLESSING,

By Joseph Smith, senior, Kirtland, Ohio, May 2, 1836, for William Harris, who was born in Fredericktown, N. B., January 19, 1823.

Brother Harris—In the name of Jesus, I lay my hands upon thy head, according to the authority of the priesthood, and the holy anointing, and the calling of God, and pronounce a patriarchal blessing upon thee. Thou hast been willing to leave thy native land for the cause of God. Thou hast suffered much, and for thy pains shall be rewarded ten-fold. The riches of the earth shall flow unto thee in time, and thou shalt receive the blessings of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and they shall reach thy posterity also; and thy father's house shall follow on, and be gathered with thee unto the mountain of Israel. Thou art of the *seed of Israel,* and the Lord hath watched over thee. Thou shalt preach in thy native land, far in the cold North; thou shalt also preach in the South, and in the East and West, and the Lord shall be with thee wherever thou shalt go; and thou shalt win many souls. Angels shall be thy guard upon thy right hand and thy left; even the twelve legions shall watch over thee: thou mayest see them, if thou wilt believe; and if any arm is raised against thee, it shall fall, and all weapons wielded to thy hurt shall perish. If any dig pits for thee, they shall fall therein: if they seek to confound thee with subtle questions, they shall be confounded; for the Lord will keep his own anointed, and fill them with knowledge. Thou shalt see within the veil, and know that thy Redeemer lives, like Paul, and testify, like unto thy brethren, that thou hast seen angels, and heard the voice of God. Thou must keep the word of wisdom, and observe all the commandments, and thou shalt have all the blessings thou canst ask for, for thyself and thy posterity; and they shall rise up and call thee blessed, for thou shalt bless thy children, and thy blessing shall remain: thou shalt be blessed in thy outgoings and in thy incomings, and thy arm shall prevail, like unto the Almighty's; for his own power shall be round about thee, and thou shalt have all power, even to *translate thyself, and change into a shadow;* so that if any shall smite at thee, they shall only hit thy shadow, and thou shalt be in another place; and the eyes of thy enemies shall be blinded, so that they cannot see thee, and thou shalt escape their power. This is thy blessing; and I cannot tell thee all, but the Lord shall add unto it a hundred-fold.

I seal thee up unto eternal life, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

Signed,
JOSEPH SMITH, Senior.

These blessings were pronounced by Smith, in the usual form, and written down and recorded on the records of the church, by a scribe; and a copy was given to the person on whom they were pronounced.

If such mummeries can be daily enacted in the world, without resulting either in utter lunacy or atheism, it is difficult to see what could produce these results.

Whether any successor is appointed to mumble, with his eyes shut, over the heads of the orphan children of the church, since the death of old Smith, is unknown.

If so, it is to be hoped that he will come nearer the truth than Smith did, both in his future and *retrospective prophecies:* for it so happened, that the above was as untrue in the past, as it was in the then future, history of Mr. Harris.

This outline is perhaps sufficient to give a general idea of the organization of the "Church of Latter Day Saints." At present, things go on smoothly. Smith has little to do but to appoint new stakes, buy and sell town-lots, obtain charters, build temples, and gather the "saints," and their cash, from the four quarters of the globe, upon his consecrated stakes.

CHAPTER VIII.

PROGRESS OF MORMONISM.—ITS CAUSES, ILLUSTRATED BY NUMEROUS EXAMPLES.

Morbid imagination—Morbid emotions—Popular errors as regards human testimony—as regards influences of Holy Spirit—St. Bernard, -Land pirate–Sympathetic convulsions—Black-death in Germany—Terantismus in Italy—Tigretia of Abyssinia—Tremblers of Cevennes, and Camisards—Convulsions of St. Medcord—Animal Magnetism—Convulsions at Hærlem—at Anglesea and Unst—Kirk officer—English factory—Revivals at Everton, Cambuslang—Kentucky—Jerks, Barks, and Mormons—Philosophy of these phenomena—Consequences of absurd opinions—Internal revelations, visions, raptures, holy comforts, &c.—Old Monks—Art of dreaming—Marvellous experience of the Mormons—Sectarianism—Mystic interpretation—Mystic and Mormon deity—Mormon facility of argument—War on human nature—Gifts of healing—Dr. Gerbi's bugs—Scurvy at Pruda—Perkins' metallic tractors—Prophet Austin—These cures not miracles—Mormons increase through neglect—Policy of their leaders.

The same general causes which have produced similar fanaticisms in all ages, have undoubtedly operated in the production and rapid progress of the Mormon delusion. The combined action of the love of power in the few, and the love of licentious freedom in the many, upon the instinct of faith, has been exhibited, in brief, both in their philosophy and their results, in the chapter on Fanaticisms.

The immediate processes by which the instinct of faith is corrupted and perverted in the human soul, are various. The most common method, in all ages and climes, has been to debase and silence reason, by the combined force of *dogmatism*, *imagination*, and *passion*.

The God of nature designed instruction of all sorts, human and divine, only to enlighten and reinstate the lost dominion of right reason, and render her the guide of conscience and the guardian of the soul. But religion, in all pagan, and in many Christian lands, has but too often been made to confound and annihilate reason, under the pretext of reinstating a higher principle, falsely called faith.

All that is needful, in order to commence this process in the mind, is only to teach men that they are to receive and believe propositions and dogmas, at which natural and wholesome reason revolts, on the mere ground of human authority.

In short, exalt dogmas and depress reason, deify the one and crush the other, but in a single instance, and the work is done; you have your fanatic, and you may now control him as you can. The soul, instead of being enlightened, as God designed, has, in fact, been enslaved.

Reason, reduced to idiocy, and left to stagger in despair, yields herself up to the guidance of imaginary phantoms; conscience, frantic and frightened at the wreck, screams where she should be silent, and only whispers where she should speak in tones of thunder.

There can be no doubt that true religion was intended, not only to appeal to and excite all the various faculties of the human soul, but also to direct and control their action. It claims rightful authority over our entire moral, intellectual, and animal nature. But, in order to achieve this, it does, and must necessarily address itself mainly, NOT to the imagination or the emotions, but to the powers of reason and conscience.

Hence its natural excitements are constant, and comparatively tranquil, and but ill-adapted to satisfy the eager and clamorous desires of those in whom the precocious and exorbitant development of the powers of imagination and emotion have almost annihilated even the existence of reason and conscience.

This unfortunate multitude, by no means small even in a Christian land, seem fated to seek nothing, and be satisfied with nothing, either in religion or any thing else, that does not keep their imaginations ever upon the stretch, and their emotions ever heaving and tossing, under the most tumultuous excitements. They have lived among air-castles and day-dreams so long, that no real and existing good can either satiate their desires, or subdue the morbid restlessness of their souls. Reason, to them, is monotony; quiet is death. They must have a faith full of mysteries and marvels, at once enveloped in the clouds, and irradiated with rainbows. A faith that makes its simple and quiet appeal to reason and conscience, that sits by their firesides and gives the law to their daily life, is to them worse than no faith at all. They want religious excitement, and they will have it. They will have what they call *the comforts of religion*, whether they discharge any of its duties or not.

They can imagine any thing they please, and believe all they can imagine. They deem themselves perfect, oftentimes, just in proportion as they become insane. Some of them are famous exhorters in church, and as famous for scolding at home. Others have but recently surrendered the voluptuousness of sense, for the voluptuousness of faith. But they all must be fanatics, or at least enthusiasts, or they can be nothing. They must either live amid storms, or stagnate; and the more extraordinary and absurd the tenets of their faith the better, because the more marvellous and exciting. Mormonism has charms for all such, if not because it is more gorgeous and imposing, yet at least because it is more novel and sensual, than most other faiths.

It is not the proper place to inquire, here, how far the novel-reading spirit of the age has tended to produce such characters; nor yet how far the pulpit and the press have been perverted to humor and foster them. That they exist, and that they are all on their way to Nauvoo, is certain, wherever or in whatever relations they may now be found.

In whatever peculiar way the instinct of faith, in the human soul, is misdirected or perverted, a broad foundation is laid for the most unbounded credulity; either for that of the fanatic, or the still greater credulity of the skeptic.

When the mind has been once enslaved, and compelled to plod on its weary and inconstant way, beneath the burden of one absurdity, it is from that hour ready to take up another, and another, till it finally sinks beneath the incumbent weight, to prattle, in premature dotage, of passing wonders and coming glories; or, in the desperation of returning energy, it throws off, at once, its burden, its conscience, and its cares, and flies for refuge to the haunts of practical atheism and sin. Those religious teachers, therefore, who are in the habit of making enormous draughts upon the credulity of their hearers, may well pause and reflect, before they proceed further. Men would rarely believe *too little*, if they were not first called upon to believe *too much*. God has not left any of the essential truths of religion to be either imagined or rationally disputed. He has placed them all in a position to be demonstrated. The fundamental truths of Christianity are no more *probable truths* than those of astronomy. They are *demonstrable;* and no man should call on his fellows to embrace by faith a single item of religious doctrine, as such, until he can first furnish the full demonstration, the proof of its truth, either from nature or the word of God, or from both. Between our *belief* and our conjectures, in religion as elsewhere, there should be, indeed, an adamantine wall.

Another cause of the rapid spread of Mormonism is the prevalence of many popular errors, engendered partly by tradition, partly through the scattered antiquated books and relics of devout men, and sometimes, it must be admitted, through the pulpit and press of our own times.

1. The popular impression, as regards the true value of human opinion and human testimony, in matters of faith, is erroneous and absurd to an almost incredible extent. The Mormon syllogism grows directly out of it. "If we have received one revelation through the testimony of twelve men, of a remote age," say they, "why not receive another on the testimony of a like number of our own age?" This we have sufficiently noticed in a previous chapter.

2. False impressions respecting the nature and design of the influences of the Holy Spirit, constitute another fertile source of mischief and fanaticism.

Their influence has been exerted in all ages of the world to an amazing extent.

I wish to present these errors, somewhat at length, in three several points of view. I am aware that the intelligent reader may be inclined, at first, to suppose that I am remonstrating against errors which do not and cannot exist in a land of light and bibles. But a knowledge of the daily arrivals at Nauvoo, from all quarters of the union, and an acquaintance with their past character and history, would convince any one that there is need of remonstrance, and of caution too, on this point.

Sound philosophy, no less than divine revelation, teaches us, that whatever of moral good there *ever was*, or *ever will be*, in our world, is either the direct or indirect result of the teachings of the Spirit of all grace and truth, the great "Father of lights, from whom cometh down every good and perfect gift." It might naturally be expected, therefore, that this great truth should be caricatured, abused, and scandalized, more than almost any other, not only by its enemies, but by its professed friends. And indeed such solemn and momentous sanctity invests the original truth itself, from its own nature, that men are wont to approach even those abuses and absurdities, which have grown out of it, with a sort of squeamish reluctance and horror, as if when they were attacking these caricatures, they were fearful of sacrilegiously assaulting things divine. But whatever may be the experience of others, I must confess I feel no more veneration for the devil's religious enterprises, when prosecuted through great truths and good men, than when he employs only falsehood and atheism. The truth is, however, that no impulse of popular sympathy, no transports of eloquence, no ecstacies, no dreams of delirium, no convulsions, no agitations, no paralysis from mere exhaustion—in short, no form of madness, hysterics, or folly, has been either too absurd, or too contemptible, to be set down as the present and undoubted effect of the influences of the Holy Spirit of truth on the mind of man. We will consider these doctrines and their phenomena in three points of view.

1. *The ordinary effects of popular eloquence and sympathy, as ascribed to the influence of the Holy Spirit.*

2. *Bodily agitations or sympathetic convulsions, as proceeding from the same source.*

3. *Internal revelations, raptures, visions, &c.*

The effects of the preaching of St. Bernard, whose wild and passionate eloquence drove the millions of Europe to the field of slaughter, exclaiming as they went, "*It is the voice of God,*" may be set down among thousands of similar cases, as an example under the first head. Indeed the crusaders seem generally to have been made to believe, that the Spirit of God was the moving power which urged them on, instead of the prostituted eloquence of their misguided or artful leaders. Nothing is more common in the history of the world, than to find men setting themselves deliberately at work to produce a given state of excitement in the minds of their auditors, on the ordinary principles of sympathy and eloquence. And there are not a few who, when they have succeeded in producing the desired effect, ascribe the results of their labors to the direct influences of the Spirit of God. Now all this may be honest error, or simple truth, or deliberate villany.

Morell, the noted land-pirate of the south and west, was in the habit of calling the people together and working upon their sympathies, and concentrating their attention in this way, at professedly religious meetings, while his comrades in guilt were employed in stealing their best horses.

But suppose, as is generally at least the fact, that the intention is good; suppose that no vain love of excitement, or gain, or popularity, or vanity, turns the mind from a state of candor and truth; suppose our teaching in all respects pure as the word of God itself, can we ever know that the excitement and interest produced in the minds of our hearers, is the result of the *immediate* and *direct* influences of the Spirit of God? Are we authorized positively to assert, that it is *not* the natural result of God's own pure and most holy truth, thus devoutly and appropriately applied, and that this is *not* the sole cause of the phenomena? Must we, in every case, resort to a system of double causes? Is the truth of God when thus proclaimed *mere sound*, which effects nothing and can effect nothing in and of itself? Are we authorized to make such positive and exclusive declarations? More than all, are we authorized to make them when the tide of popular sympathy runs high and strong, for the express and only purpose of making it run higher and stronger?

Again; suppose that the excitement which we may have succeeded in producing, is not altogether healthful; suppose we have commingled error with truth, and stirred up strange fires instead of the flame of love; suppose that the excitement is on the whole quite adverse to the cause of Christ and of truth, but still God has so *overruled it* as to convert some souls, and so as to bring some good, more or less, out of the general evil; is God therefore directly responsible for the whole excitement, and are we authorized to announce that he is? Is it safe to make the Holy Spirit of God responsible *directly* for all the excitements of passion, sympathy, eloquence, or ignorance which men raise, or can raise, by preaching from texts out of the Bible? The freedom with which events of this sort (which may be the result of either eloquence, or passion, or sympathy, or vanity, or rivalry, or weakness, or ignorance) are ascribed to the Spirit of God, tends fearfully to two specific results.

First: It makes utter infidels of multitudes; they know that the same effects, in a *court* and in a *church*, are produced, or at least *may be* produced by the same causes; and they look at assertions of the contrary as so many pious frauds.

Second: It increases the credulity of other multitudes, and makes them the ready dupes of every impostor or fanatic who may choose to play upon their sympathies in the church, and claim the awful sanctions of the Spirit of God. "You are excited," says the impostor; "the Holy Spirit is *now* moving upon your hearts." They believe it, and follow him. They *feel* that it is so; that is to say, they feel *something*, and observe *something* operating upon others, and they trust implicitly to their religious guides to tell them what it is, and how produced.

When the emissaries of Joe Smith or any other fanatic or impostor comes along with things still more new and strange, they feel that *something* again, perhaps in a still higher degree! They have been taught to believe that it is the direct influence of the Spirit of God on their hearts. They are now told the same story. They believe it, and are gathered with their own at Nauvoo.

Now who is most at fault, their first teacher or their last? If we would stop the streams, must we not purify or destroy the fountain of error?

2. *Bodily agitations, or sympathetic convulsions*, have been, and are now, to an immense extent, regarded as the most undoubted signs of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. Whether this error is imbibed from tradition, or antiquated books, or from the pulpit, or the press, it is not material to inquire. The extent to which it actually exists, and the power it actually exerts, may be learned both from the present and past history of the Mormons.

As we have seen, it was one of the most important elements of their power in the outset, and though subsequent disorders and fear of rivalry compelled them to rebuke it at head-quarters, it is still one of the most energetic forces in recruiting their ranks. It is one of the sectarian chills which precedes and induces the Mormon fever. Multitudes are now in the chill; other multitudes still are strongly predisposed to it. "What!" say they, "if you attribute the ordinary excitements of popular sympathy to purely natural causes, you surely will allow that trances, convulsions, &c., demonstrate the presence of the power of God."

I know of no other way of annihilating this fond confidence, than by exhibiting the facts and phenomena in question, as they have actually occurred in the world, and leaving them to explain themselves. For, in this case at least, nothing but ignorance is the mother of devotion; and when the ignorance is removed, the credulity and the devotion, if it may be called so, will both die a natural death.

It is well known that any strong and violent passion, as anger, fear, hope, joy, &c., however excited, will produce not only convulsions, trances, &c., but even sudden death. Occurrences of the latter kind are not unfrequent. But the history of the world is full of instances in which convulsive diseases, excited by terror, fear, sympathy, enthusiasm, or exhaustion, have spread by a sort of contagion, through whole communities. This disease has sometimes been called "chorea sancti vite," and also more appropriately "sympathetic" or "epidemic convulsions."

In A. D. 1021, we find the first authentic notice of these convulsions. They appeared at the monastery at Kobbeg, in Germany. Eighteen countrymen appeared in the churchyard on Christmas eve, and by boisterous and improper conduct, disturbed the divine service then in progress. The priest, offended at their rudeness, uttered his fearful imprecations and anathemas against them, which at once threw these superstitious and benighted wretches into the most direful convulsions and spasms. They were for some time unable to eat, drink, or sleep, until the intercession of the bishop dispelled their fears and again restored quiet to their minds and bodies. They then all slept soundly for three days. Four of them died of the disease, and the others were affected with nervous tremblings for life.

In A. D. 1237, another case is recorded, in which one hundred children in Erfurt, Germany, were suddenly seized with a similar convulsive disease, and many of them died.

In A. D. 1278, in Utrecht, Germany, about two hundred persons, being seized with this disease, sallied out, leaping and dancing, and collected upon a neighboring bridge, which ultimately broke down under the pressure of their weight, and all were drowned. The people and priests supposed that they were possessed of the devil, and presented them with the holy sacrament, for the purpose of exorcism, just before the bridge fell. One of them treated this effort for their rescue from the devil with contempt, and the priest accordingly attributed the fall of the bridge to the Divine vengeance.

At an early age, at least before the fourth century, the Roman church had introduced some of the pagan and bacchanalian revels of the Greeks into their wonted celebration of the day of St. John the Baptist.

In Germany, on the evening of that day, they were, in later times, in the habit of building a bonfire, around which the devotees danced and leaped, in full belief that through the prayers of the patron saint, all diseases for the coming year would be averted by that antic solemnity. On the first of July, 1374, these exhausted devotees were seized, in great numbers, by these grotesque and frightful convulsions, which from that circumstance have been called St. John's dance. A similar event is also said to have happened at the celebration of St. Vitus. It is from this occurrence, that the same disease has been called St. Vitus' dance.

In 1347, nearly one fourth of all Europe died of the black-death, a most hideous and direful plague, and ere they had recovered from these unwonted terrors, these horrid convulsions appeared and prevailed, to the astonishment of the age, for more than two hundred years. The disease spread over all Germany, and the neighboring provinces on the north.

It first commenced in the town of Aachen. Some few were taken with strong convulsions in their limbs, impelling them to dance and leap, screaming and foaming in wild whirls, for hours together; until exhausted by all imaginable sorts of grimaces and contortions, they fell foaming and shrieking in great agony upon the ground. Then they saw apparitions, visions, sights, and wonders; ghosts floating on streams of blood, heaven opened, the Saviour enthroned "by the mother of God," and other things accordant with the superstitions of the age. The people ran in crowds to behold the hideous spectacle, and from beholding to catch and exhibit the disease in their turn. The multitude of the possessed, as they were called, daily increased, until it spread throughout all the provinces. In some single villages from five hundred to one thousand persons were possessed of the devil, as was supposed. They thronged around the churches. The priests resorted to exorcism in vain. Religious processions were appointed; the Scriptures read; masses said, and songs sung to exorcise these supposed demoniacs, but all in vain. It was subsequently discovered that nothing could relieve them but to gird them round the waist, or beat them with incredible violence on the stomach after they fell. This, by removing their flatulence and rigidity, gave many relief.

About forty-four years after this, in 1418, the disease appeared again in Strasburg, and spread in the same way. Swarms of dancers paraded the streets, followed by another curious multitude, soon to shudder, leap, and dance in their turn. The civil authorities in this case interposed to arrest the sympathy and contagion of the disease by secluding from public view all those affected by it. Their success was gratifying, though not in all cases complete. In the sixteenth century, the famous Paracelsus took the disease out of the hands of the priest, and committed it to the hands of the quack. He ordered his patients to make an image of themselves of wax, to sit down and look at it, with the utmost intensity, *and will all their sins and curses into it*, and then burn both together in the fire. This proved effectual only where the disease depended solely on the power of the imagination over the body; in other cases other remedies were prescribed.

In 1430, a similar dancing mania prevailed in Italy, called at the time terantismus, from the popular impression that it came from the bite of an insect or spider of similar name, Tarantula. The people in this case seemed to fall, all at once, into a state of insensibility, and, finally, many of them died. Nothing could arouse them but the sound of musical instruments.

The imaginary terror spread from village to village, and every bite or scratch, from whatever cause, was attributed to the terrible, mysterious, and unknown insect. Their fears overpowered them, and they fell, either to rise no more or to wake by the potent charms of music. All Italy resounded with the dinging of drums, and the screeching of fifes and flutes. The terror-stricken sufferers leaped upon their feet at the sound, and threw off their disease and their fears in violent and convulsive dances.

This panic of the poison-spider is said to have spread into distant Asia. During the prevalence of these alarming nervous epidemics, amid the general gloom of superstition which overhung the minds of all, many frightful plagues had scourged all Europe, and especially Italy, in rapid succession. The black-death, as we have seen, swept its millions from Germany just before the nervous epidemic in that country, and from 1119 to 1340, the people had felt the ravages of the stone plague no less than sixteen times. Their bodies had become exhausted, and their minds enfeebled, by the universal superstition and terror which everywhere hung around them. An epidemic, called the Tigretia, similar to that in Italy, prevailed in Abyssinia, as related by Nathaniel Pierce, in 1810. The patient was first seized with a fever, and succeeding stupor, which often continued for months, and wasted them to mere skeletons.

The most certain remedy here was the martial music of drums and fifes, at the sound of which the skeleton patient would arouse, then sit up, then stand, and finally, as the music grew more and more brisk, leap and dance on the floor for hours together. If the music ceased before they were fully restored to their natural activity, they relapsed into stupor again. This sometimes required days, and often even then failed, and the patient died. They were, however, sometimes cured by the reading of a portion of St. John's gospel over them.*

After the repeal of the edict of Nantes, in 1685, the protestants in the south of France were subjected to the most violent persecutions. Their children were torn from them, the men sent to the galleys, women imprisoned, and priests hanged. Exhausted with irritation, persecution, and terror, many of them were seized with tremblings and convulsions, while they preached and prophesied the triumphs of their holy cause. Multitudes came to see and hear, who soon, in turn, like the German dancers, were seen to tremble, preach, and prophesy. In their secret meetings, surrounded on all hands by the terrors of persecution, and the still more dreadful terrors of credulity and imagination, some one would be seized with the holy spirit, as they called it, fall convulsing, and, after trembling for a while, would rise and prophesy. Then another would be taken, and another, and sometimes two or three would be found preaching at the same time. Children, of not more than three or four years of age, were thus seized; and even idiots, when thus inspired, seemed gifted with unwonted ability. The tremblers were heard with profound attention by the multitude, who believed them inspired of the Holy Spirit.

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* See Hecker's Epidemics of the Middle Ages

It is needless to say that their prophecies failed, and the peculiarities of their sect have all ceased, as we hope, forever.

The Camisards, or French prophets, of Viverais, already mentioned, arose about this time, and from similar causes of fear and hope.

The convulsions of St. Medar were results of a strange and fanatical epidemic, which occurred around the tomb of the Abbe de Paris, in the monastery of St. Medaro, near Paris, about the year 1727, and continued for ten or twelve years. This fanatic was revered for his piety and powers of healing, in his life; and during the trials and persecutions which befell the appellant Jansenists heretics, after his death, numbers resorted to his tomb for devotion and health. Some were of course miraculously healed; the fame of the miracle was noised abroad, greater multitudes thronged around. Some women believed that God had now appeared in behalf of their righteous cause, against their cruel persecutors, and so fell into convulsions.

The contagion spread, and cures and convulsions abounded. All Paris flowed towards the favored church, to hear, see, be convulsed, and cured, at one and the same time. Handfuls of sacred earth were gathered, and sent to bear commingled health and convulsions to patients abroad, and thus the disease spread far and wide. As many as eight hundred convulsionaries were sometimes seized at once. They attributed their affection and cure to the spirit and power of their guardian angel. Even their skeptical persecutors could neither account for nor deny the reality of the spasms and cures. The edict and guard of the king finally closed the access to the tomb, but still this epidemic of commingled fear, hope, and credulity, did not cease from among the French entirely, until the revolution of 1790, though its virulence was somewhat abated in a few years. When this disease was at its height, many of the convulsionaries, amid cries, shouts, and howlings, fell down writhing in the greatest agony. Their dreadful pangs could be relieved only by immense pressure, or incredible blows on the stomach. To this end, they were laid on a plank, and another plank was placed upon them, and their friends mounted the plank, and pressed it down with their weight. It is said that they have been known to support twenty men, without pain or injury, before their spasms would relax. At other times, the stoutest men were selected to beat them upon the pit of the stomach, with severe blows from heavy stones, mauls, &c.; the sufferers crying to them to strike harder, when it seemed as though their whole bodies would be crushed and annihilated by the terrible strokes. When the blows became sufficiently severe to relax the spasms, they became relieved from their sufferings. These accounts seem incredible, and would be so, in fact, were they not attested by most unexceptionable witnesses, and did they not fall in with a constantly occurring series of well-known phenomena of a similar kind. However, the disease was unquestionable, whatever we may say of the cure.

Immediately after the convulsioners of St. Medaro, followed the discovery of the wonderful powers of animal magnetism, by M. Mesmer, of Paris.

With this he supposed that he could cure all diseases, discover and remove their latent causes, &c. He supposed that his magnetism was some subtle fluid, universally diffused, which affected the mind and body somewhat like electricity. The ceremony of magnetizing was performed in a large room full of spectators. A throng of subjects was gathered round a mystic tub, called the banquet. They were connected together by a cord passing from subject to subject, and by a peculiar union of hands, or thumbs, while the operator transmitted the unknown influence from the banquet, by swinging his enchanted rods of iron about their heads and faces, with peculiar and majestic solemnity. The ravishing and changing airs of the pianoforte, placed in the background, contributed to the desired result. Amid this paraphernalia of credulity and quackery, the patients stood in silence for one or two hours. Some experienced no effect; others were taken at length with coughing and spitting, others with slight pains, and heats, and copious perspirations.

Others still fell into what was called the crisis, and were agitated and tortured with the most violent convulsions. In some instances, these convulsions continued for two or three hours, accompanied with hideous contortions of the limbs and body, spasms of the throat, ejection of blood and phlegm, wandering and rolling of the eyes, alternate laughing, weeping, shrieking, &c. They finally fell into a state of partial or entire insensibility, apparently unconscious of all else, save the change of the musical sounds and the potent voice or sign of the magnetizer, whose wink or look alone seemed sufficient to rouse them from their stupor. These facts were all witnessed and attested by four gentlemen, of the greatest celebrity in science, appointed for this purpose by the French king, in 1784; and a report of the committee was also made out, which still can be resorted to as authority on this subject. One member of this committee was the distinguished Dr. Franklin, the then American minister at Paris. The committee first remarked, that many *women* were affected, and but few men; also that when one was affected, others soon followed.

They resolved, therefore, first to subject *themselves* to the operator in person, which they did through three successive days, for two hours and a half, without any effect.

They next proposed to experiment upon those of feeble health, away from the excitement of the public crowd. Of fourteen subjects, only three, and those from the lower classes, experienced any decided effects. At length a servant woman was magnetized, and appeared so peculiarly sensitive to the influence, that she could trace the movement of M. Jumelin's fingers by the heat which followed in certain parts of her body. If he pointed at certain parts, she soon swooned. They then bandaged her eyes, and made her believe she was magnetized when she was not, and the same results followed. Again M. Jumelin magnetized her without her seeing him, and no effects were produced. Others again were blinded and treated in a similar manner, and when they *believed* they were magnetized they felt the effects whether they were or not; and, vice versa, when they believed that they were *not* magnetized they felt no effects, even though the operator, during the whole time, was exerting his utmost power. These experiments convinced all Europe, for the time, that these convulsions arose solely from the combined power of belief and imagination, and the spell of Mesmer was broken.

Many instances of the infectious nature of convulsive diseases, or rather their propagation by sympathetic imitation, and of the surprising effect of imaginary remedies in removing them, as well as of imaginary causes in producing them, have been recorded by the most eminent philosophers, divines, and physicians.

The learned Boerhaave, who died in Holland in the year 1737, was previously called to administer to a series of convulsions, propagated from one to another by sight, in the poorhouse at Harlæm.

A young girl, under impressions of great terror, was first seized with convulsive paroxysms. Her friends, in attempting to restrain her, were soon seized in like manner, and thus one after another fell under its influence simply from seeing the paroxysms of their young friends, until almost all the boys and girls were terribly afflicted by regularly returning paroxysms of this disease. No sooner was one of the number seized with the paroxysms, than all the others in sight followed on in like manner. The skill of the attending physicians was entirely baffled. They sent for Boerhaave. He perceived that the origin and propagation of the disease depended on the imagination and sympathetic imitation. He therefore addressed himself to the mind, for a remedy.

He filled the various apartments with furnaces, containing burning coal, and red-hot irons curiously bent and wrought. He then, with due gravity and solemnity, announced to the assembled children that all medicine must be laid entirely aside, since the only remedy he knew of was to seize the first one afflicted with a paroxysm, and burn his arm with a red-hot iron to the bone.

Terrified at the thought of this dreadful remedy, their fears of convulsions gave place to a more salutary fear of the irons, and thus by diverting their minds and reanimating their fortitude to resistance, as they felt the spasms approaching, the convulsions were cured and the disease disappeared.

In 1796, Dr. Heygarth mentions another case of convulsions propagated by the influence of terror and sympathy, from one female tenant on the island of Anglesea to twenty-three others, all between the ages of 10 and 25 years, and all females, except one boy of seventeen.

In 1774, the Rev. Wm. Archibald describes another case of convulsions, prevailing through a number of years, propagated in the same way, in his parish in

Unst, one of the Shetland Isles. One female was at first taken at home. After a time she happened to fall into a paroxysm in church, and then, by the combined influence of fear and sympathy, the disease soon spread, to the great alarm of spectators and friends.

In another parish of Delting, numbers were seized, especially when the church was crowded, or any unusual excitement prevailed. Fifty or sixty were sometimes carried out of the house at one single communion season, when they struggled and raved with all their strength. They were first seized with a degree of faintness—then followed wild and frantic cries and shrieks, at the sound of which all who were subject to this disorder fell into similar paroxysms.

In these northern isles, divine service was sometimes wholly interrupted by these convulsions, notwithstanding no one ever supposed them in any way connected with religion, and the clergy used all possible precautions to prevent their occurrence, instead of exciting and encouraging them by tumultuous and fanatical harangues.

One woman in Northaven was effectually cured of her convulsions by the kirk officer, who caught her up while in one of her spasms, and threw her into a neighboring pool. She never had another. Others feared the same treatment, and like the children at Harlæm, repressed their agitations by aid of the more powerful apprehension of the pool.

These cases are similar to that of a man in Chelmsford, Massachusetts, who had a child affected with convulsive chorea. The remaining five children began to imitate their playmate in sport, and thus caught the disease themselves. At length the afflicted father brought in a block and axe, and solemnly threatened to take off the head of the first one who should be convulsed, except the one who was first taken. This, like the *hot irons*, or the *kirk officer's pool*, broke the spell, and the five children were cured.

In the Gentleman's Magazine of 1787, it is reported that in an English factory, containing about three hundred hands, a girl mischievously introduced a mouse into the bosom of another, who fell into convulsions which lasted for about twenty-four hours, without cessation. On the following day, others were seized, and on the fourth day their number amounted to twenty-four, and probably the disease would have gone through the establishment, had it not fortunately been arrested by means of electricity.*

We are told that at a religious meeting held at Everton, in 1759, there were " faintings," " crying out" with the greatest violence for hours, " weeping aloud," "violent contortions of the body," " loud breathing, like that of people half strangled and gasping for life," "cries, like those of one dying in bitter anguish," " dropping, with violence inconceivable, which shook the house," "stamping with the feet, as if trying to burst the floor through," "lying on the floor, as if dead, for hours," " falling backwards and forwards, wringing hands, and roaring like bulls," with faces sometimes red as scarlet, and at others almost black. The violent struggles broke the benches and pews in the church, while some unaffected in the house, before they reached home dropped down in the road, as if dead. It is remarked " that few old people experienced any thing of this work of God," and scarcely any rich people. They either showed an entire contempt of, or an enmity to it.

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* Upham's Ment. Philos., vol. II. 388.

In 1742, at Cambuslang, Scotland, after preaching for most of the year on regeneration, the minister, Rev. Mr. McCulloch, increased the frequency of his labors, during the winter and spring, and finally ended them in a series of daily meetings in the open air, during the month of August, when upwards of thirty thousand persons assembled, and listened to from four to fifteen sermons per diem, for several days, from Whitfield and several other eminent clergyman.

At these meetings similar scenes occurred, and were attributed by many to the direct agency of the Holy Spirit. There were many conversions ; but before ten years had elapsed, the devoted Mr. McCulloch had painful cause to bewail, in a letter to a friend, the *many backslidings* that had occurred.

Dr. Edwards, in this country, gave the influence of his great name to sanction and sustain the popular impression, that such agitations are the immediate effects of the Spirit of God on the mind.

In the year 1800, the great revival in Kentucky, as it is called, commenced. The people were accustomed to assemble, sometimes to the number of ten or twelve thousand, and they often continued together, in devotional exercises, for several days and nights. Here the people were sometimes seized with general tremor, the pulse grew weaker, their breathing difficult, and, at long intervals, their hands and feet became cold, and finally they fell, and both pulse and breath, and all symptoms of life forsook them for nearly an hour, during which time they suffered no pain, and were perfectly conscious of their condition, and knew what was passing around them.

At one time, during service, several shrieks were uttered, and people fell in all directions. Not less than one thousand fell at one meeting. Their outward expressions of devotion consisted in alternate singing, crying, laughing, shouting, and every variety of violent motion, of which the muscular system is capable. These violent motions they soon became unable to resist. They were violently thrown upon the ground by the convulsions, where their "motions resembled those of a fish upon land." This disease lasted through several years, in some cases, and propagated itself by sympathetic imitation, from one to another, with astonishing rapidity, in crowds, and often in small assemblies. Their convulsions were ultimately distinguished by the several names of "the rolling exercise," "the jerks," and "the barks."

The rolling exercise, consisted in doubling the head and feet together, and rolling over and over like a trundling hoop or wheel, or in stretching themselves horizontally and rolling swiftly over and over, like a dog, sopping through mud and mire as they went.

The jerks, consisted in violent twitches and contortions of the body in all its parts, as if goaded on all sides by a red-hot iron. Sometimes the head would fly round half way, and back and forth, until not a feature could be recognised, and the hair of the females would snap like a horsewhip; and some were ultimately obliged to shave their heads. When attacked by the jerks, they sometimes ran and leaped about, bolting like frogs, and exhibiting all manner of grotesque and hideous contortions and twitches of the face and limbs.

The barks, consisted in getting down on all-fours, growling, snapping the teeth, and barking like dogs. Sometimes they squatted upon their hams, like a dog, and looked up at the face of the minister, and continued demurely and quietly barking at him while he *preached* to them. These last were peculiarly gifted in prophecies, trances, dreams, visions, rhapsodies, sights of spirits, of angels, of heaven, the holy city, angelic hosts, &c.

It was remarked that these affections would seize upon both sexes and all constitutions alike; but it most readily attacked the young enthusiasts upon the subject of religion. It *rarely* seized upon those of the most *consistent and exemplary piety,* but upon almost all *lukewarm* and lazy professors. The wicked also feared it, and were subject to it. Those, especially, who came to persecute, or to mock, would even curse, and swear, and damn the exercises, while jerking. But naturalists, who desired to get the disease for the sake of philosophizing upon it, were never convulsed.

An account of a similar wonderful phenomenon among the Mormons, at Kirtland, Ohio, has already been given in the chapter on the history of Mormonism, which the reader is requested to refer to, that he may give the Mormons their due share of glory in these wonderful manifestations of Divine favor.*

These are among the most important authenticated facts pertaining to the history of these sympathetic convulsions, and their attendant trances and visions. We perceive that the same nervous phenomena are attributed, at one time in Germany, to the *devil;* in France, to the sainted *spirit of Deacon Paris,* and then again to Animal Magnetism; in Italy, to a *spider;* in England, to a *mouse;* and at Everton, Cambuslang, Tennessee, and Kirtland, Ohio, to the *Holy Spirit.* It would seem that some of these opinions must be wrong. We are inclined to think that the wonderful spasms, visions, trances, &c., experienced by Sidney Rigdon and Company, in Ohio, are no more proof of the divine authority of their doctrine, or their leader, than are the same phenomena, in Germany, of the divinity of the devil; in Italy, that of a spider; and in England, that of a mouse.

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* See Chap. I. page 28.

It is plain that these phenomena have occurred more frequently where numbers became excited and alarmed, without any connection with the subject of religion, than they have in such connection. The truth is, these diseases are no more referable to any peculiar supernatural agency, than is the fever, or the smallpox, or the toothache. They are liable to occur and be propagated, by sympathy, from one to another, amid all assembled, terrified, or exhausted throngs, especially if they can be made to believe in any way whatever, by mystic wands, or spiders, or tractors, or mice, that they are surrounded by mysterious and potent influences of unknown and dreadful power.

Any purely imaginary cause may both produce and remove them, by exciting terror to produce, and again allaying it to remove them. The question now before us is not, whether the influences of the Holy Spirit may not, as well as other things or influences, in peculiar states of the body, operate as an exciting cause, in the production of such results; but whether we are either authorized to teach or believe that this is the fact in any case.

Have we the least reason to suppose, that divine influences, in any case, produce, or even tend to produce, any such results? And yet good men have so believed and so taught; and our country is full of the results of their teaching in many places, and especially at Nauvoo.

Had Dr. Edwards, whose praise for piety is justly in all the churches, lived to see the final development of these opinions in Tennessee and Kirtland, he surely would have revised his belief, or else he must have admitted that the Spirit is poured out in profusion on backsliders, profane swearers, blasphemers, and impostors, while it is utterly withheld, at least in that form, from all the most devout Christians and inquiring naturalists.

President Baxter, in his letter to Dr. Alexander, avows his conviction that the convulsions in Tennessee were the result of the Spirit, because they operated as the Saviour promised the Spirit should operate—viz, they "convinced of sin, of righteousness, and of a judgment to come." He seems to have forgotten that the Saviour did *not* promise that the Spirit should set the world to twitching, jerking, and barking.

Again: we are told, that we must expect that the operations of the Spirit will change from age to age.

True, this may be so; but the vain imagination, credulity, and dogmas of men, change, from age to age, much more than the Spirit of God does.

Such scenes, in modern times, are also often compared to the events of the day of Pentecost, of old. Probably the operations of the Spirit were as intense then, as they have ever been since, at any time, or in any age.

And what do we learn from that memorable scene? We do indeed read that the Spirit was then poured out in power; that the disciples spake with tongues, and were greatly amazed at what happened. But of the precise number that were affected with shouting, bellowing, trembling, twitching, jerking, barking, hysterics, catalepsy, and nightmare, we are not definitely informed. Perhaps Smith's new translation might throw some light on this point. We may as well lay the opinions of men, both good and bad, on the shelf, until that new light, from the Mormon divinity, shall be given us.

If a few misguided, though devout men, gather crowds of thousands together in the open air, or in some close room, and keep them there, day and night, preaching, singing, and shouting, until their nervous energy becomes quite exhausted, and they set to jerking, twitching, barking, and finally fall down in fits of hysterics or catalepsy; and if, forsooth, the Holy Spirit overrules this preposterous, but well-meant excitement, and even converts and saves many amid such a bedlam of lunatics, shall we, therefore, make the Spirit of God responsible for the whole excitement, catterwaul, nightmare, and all, and call upon the world to believe us? No. God is not the author of confusion, but of order; not of evil, but of good; and such claims, amid the light of the present day, are an insult to God, and an outrage upon the common sense of mankind. It is Mormonism, in all ages and all churches—*Mormonism*, whether found at Northampton, at Cambuslang, in Kentucky, or at Nauvoo. It is everywhere the same thing, inside and out; and it is ridiculous, or something worse, to decry it in one place, wink at it in another, and practise it in a third. Smith and Company are in the habit of working up their hearers, by one stratagem and another, to the most intense excitement, and then of informing them that the Spirit is poured out upon them.

Let those who choose, go and do likewise; but let them not complain of Mormons for doing the same thing. And if, by these and similar over-draughts upon the credulity of their hearers, they finally succeed in breaking down all their powers of rational inference, and thus prepare them for the missions and pilgrimages of the prophet, let them not complain of Joe Smith. He only perfidiously perfects what they have so devoutly begun. He only gathers the fruits of a harvest from seed sown by themselves, and fostered and ripened by their care.

All loose and floating opinions of this sort may, and often *do*, tend to increase popular excitement, for a time, in a given limited neighborhood. This is often the sole design of such teaching. But they tend, in the long-run, definitely and specifically to three given results:—1. To make one class utter skeptics and atheists. 2. To make another large class doubt whether, in truth, God does exert any moral influence upon the world, except through ordinary well-known means. 3. They prepare still greater multitudes to believe that all their emotions and feelings, however mischievous and absurd, come directly from God; and they stand ready to follow the man who can most excite them with new and strange things, whoever he may be, as being pre-eminently the man of God. Joe Smith and Company happen to be the favorite enchanters now, as

Matthias, Jemima Wilkinson, and Ann Lee were some years ago, soon after the great revivals in New-England. Others, however, divide the spoil with him.

If such facts and events are ascribed directly, or in popular belief, to God, the public mind cannot and will not hold fast to the great truth, that all our hope is in God, and God alone, and that we are, each and all, utterly dependent on him for every good thought, word, and deed, as well as for eternal salvation; and that we are, at the same time, *so* dependent as not to imply any thing contrary either to the soundest reason or the highest moral freedom. If their credulity is tasked, either in this, or any other way, contrary to reason and scripture, we shall soon find them in two great classes, one class of skeptics, another of fanatics, ready for any leader or any adventurer whatever. As a caution to the former, I will only add that, in this same way, revivals of pure religion have often been brought into contempt in their minds, and in the minds of their comrades. Doubtless, if they discriminated more, and doubted less, they would show more intellect, and secure to themselves more good; but they will not do it. The mass of mankind will either take or reject things, under the same name, by the gross, and we must expect it. Hence, all should take care what they label with sacred names. Truth is like an apothecary's drugs; if the labels are wrong, it is worse than nothing. The chance of a wrong dose secures the rejection of a right and needful one. If ever there was a class, or a race of men on earth, who ought neither to assert nor believe *any thing* in religion, until it is *absolutely demonstrated*, however unimportant, the religious teachers of the United States are that class.

3. *But internal revelations, visions, raptures*, and *ecstacies, of all sorts*, are also ascribed to the direct influences of the Holy Spirit. This, again, is not simply like Mormonism; it is, in itself, one of the main pillars of Mormonism. Doubtless the devout Christian enjoys a peace and comfort of mind, in all the duties of his life, which the world knows not of; but does this justify us in referring all our transient states of internal commotion to the direct agency of the Spirit of God? Have we not an animal as well as a spiritual and immortal nature? and is the latter without change, except by miracle? Multitudes measure the daily influences of the Spirit of God upon their minds, not by the degree of fidelity with which they are enabled to discharge all their duties to God and man, but by the amount of pleasurable or happy feelings which they are enabled, by one process and another, to excite in themselves. A brisk northwester brings down upon them copious effusions of what they call the influences of the Spirit, while an envious east wind, or a drizzling southern blast, blows it all away again. To-day they are in ecstacies; to-morrow, in despair. Graham-bread brings the one; plum-pudding, the other. They attribute all, however, to the presence or absence of the Spirit of comfort.

But this phase of error is of small moment, comparatively, for there are comparatively few among spiritual pleasure-seekers, sufficiently fidgety to fall under the full influence of these ups and downs.

A far more mischievous error, is this: multitudes get the impression, in some way, that they are the children of God, as perhaps they are. They are taught to pray to God to guide their minds into the knowledge of the truth, and to believe, in full confidence, that he is willing and ready to do it. Now this is precisely right. It is what every rational human being should do and believe. But instead of expecting that God will so lead them, by tranquillizing their passions, and thus enabling them to use the full and unembarrassed force of the powers he has given them, on the duties of life, they expect some wonderful internal sign, or impulse, or emotion, which shall at once either relieve or confirm the tedious processes of thought, and indicate to them the path of duty and faith, not only by the convictions of reason and conscience, but also by the impulses of passion, or, as they fancy, the direct intimations of the Deity. Instead of endeavoring to tranquillize their emotions, therefore, by prayer, they at once set themselves to working their minds up to as high a pitch of excitement as possible; and that side of any question around which their feelings kindle, and glow, and burn most readily and most furiously, is of course the side of truth, approved by the Spirit, and blessed and sanctioned by an unction from on high.

Now, the Mormon prophet says that the Lord told him how to go through this whole process to perfection while translating the gold bible. "First, study it out in your own mind, and then pray, and, if it is right, your bosom shall *burn* within you." The rule is short and comprehensive; thousands are now practising upon it at Nauvoo, and other thousands who are in a fair way to be there soon.

The old monks had special rules for exciting these enrapturing visions and ecstacies of faith, which many moderns fall into by accident. Indeed, this is the case with most of those who seek for *pleasure* to themselves, or happy feelings, as they call them, in religion, instead of *duty* to God and their fellows.

The substance of all their various rules was first by prayers, watchings, fastings, penances, and devout contemplations, to increase the nervous irritability of the system, and render the imagination as vigorous and brisk as possible, and the corrective power of reason and the senses as weak and languid as possible. To this end, some fixed their eyes, as long and intently as possible, on a crucifix, others on the heavens, others on their noses, and still others on their navels. They were thus soon enabled to pass whole hours in ecstatic raptures, and visions unutterable. The Spanish St. Theresia, through extreme emaciation, produced by these means, was enabled to live amid visions and glories for more than twenty years.

A certain poet, by the name of Guatry, tells us that he resorted to the same method, of fasting and watching, in order to excite and arouse his visions of poetic inspiration. Other poets have often tried similar means of giving their imagination the ascendancy over their reason, if, indeed, they had any reason. This is only the sublime art of dreaming while one is awake. Somnambulism, or sleep-walking, is, on the other hand, the more rational art of being awake while one dreams; and those who endeavor to excite in themselves, by prayer or otherwise, internal communications and revelations of the Spirit, by giving their emotions and imagination the ascendancy over the powers of reason, are in a fair way to dream all the time, both sleeping and waking. It seems almost fated, that men of such habits of devotion should become Mormons, in whatever church they are. They have never sought much else in religion but to get periodical happy feelings. Their old sources of excitement lose their power, and some new fanaticism is indispensable to furnish fuel for the flame. Every Mormon knows that Smith's book is true, because he sought in agonizing prayer, and God, by his Spirit, revealed it to him. He means, by agonizing prayer, simply heaving up his diaphragm, holding his breath, and praying as though the Deity was deaf; and the unction of the Spirit, as he thinks, comes down just in proportion to the intensity with which his diaphragm heaves up. Perhaps some may think that many things here ascribed to either the processes or the perversions of nature, are the genuine results of the Spirit of truth. If so, then the Mormons have got the truth, more pure and unadulterated than any other class of religionists, and we ought to be marching towards Nauvoo at once.

At Kirtland, they had their trances, visions, and convulsions by wholesale. Direct revelations from the Spirit are hourly occurrences. The Spirit is mightily poured out upon their popular meetings. It fills the minds of the saints with raptures and ecstatic joy. Their leaders know that all these things are the direct influences of the Spirit. The pious Mormon, who has been proselyted from some of the other churches, now enjoys in his new abode far greater light, more thrilling, and rapturous, and ecstatic impulses and emotions than ever he did before; and, above all, he has found out that Smith's book, the 116 pages, Jared's barges, and all, are of divine origin and authority; for the Spirit, sought in agonizing prayer, has expressly revealed it unto him; and he knows *in his soul* that it is so. Let others, who know things in their *souls* before they know them in their *heads*, take warning; and let all take warning, who trust to any thing in prayer but *simple sincerity;* or to any thing in belief but *pure reason;* or any thing in duty but *simple natural conscience*, well enlightened by God's *most holy truth.* If the Spirit of God, in mercy, condescends to guide our wayward minds, he will guide them through these healthful and natural channels, and no other.

By thus speaking of reason, I do not exclude faith; for faith is cordial belief *on rational evidence*, and belief in any thing whatever, on any other ground, is not faith, but folly, or madness, or presumption; and those who teach men to believe on any other ground, teach Mormonism, and not Christianity.

One primary cause of the spread of the former may be said, in general, to arise from the extreme frequency with which men are called upon to believe in matters of faith, without having the grounds of rational belief placed distinctly and clearly before them. Doubtless this is an error inevitable, to some extent, with us all, from both limitation of mind and the uncertainties of language. But, if religious belief could be chained rigorously to reason, fanaticism, and infidelity too, would soon be consigned to the moles and the bats.

The influence of modern sectarian animosities, jealousies, and rivalries, upon both the origin and progress of Mormonism, is sufficiently apparent. Smith himself attributes his own hegira to the influence of sectarian divisions on his mind.

Whether this is a simple truth, or a mere afterthought, *a correction of the press*, for specific ends, we cannot determine. Sectarian divisions have, however, contributed immensely to the growth of the Mormons in two distinct ways.

1. They lead vast multitudes to suppose, that the great substance of Christianity lies in those outward forms and metaphysical distinctions, about which the sects are most inclined to wrangle.

2. The disputes which have thus arisen, have too often confounded the natural powers of man's moral reason and discrimination, by investing them on all sides with a dense fog of commingled truths and sophisms, amid which there is neither darkness nor light. In this way, they excite, in the minds of many, an eager and inordinate desire that light from some source, either natural or supernatural, should dispel the darkness, and reduce to quiet and order the chaos that reigns both within and without.

If men are once made to feel that their eternal salvation, either in part or in whole, is suspended on a metaphysical cobweb, they will never rest easy until they think they see clearly what that cobweb hangs on. If Joe Smith can tell them, on divine authority, they will believe him, because they prefer belief to doubt. Men can endure to submit to the necessary conditions of human ignorance, and live in doubt, as regards all they deem unessential. But the moment these unessentials become magnified into great fundamental truths, by the declamatory warfare of sects, doubt is more intolerable than absurdity.

Again: the Mormons have not failed to take all possible advantage of this condition of things, by engendering distrust in all other sects, and holding up their own, as the only refuge to which men may at once flee, for the inspired solution of all their doubts, and in the sanctuary of which they may cherish, to the full, that hope of universal union and concord, so instinctively dear to the human soul.

The prevalent mystical interpretation of the Scriptures has operated in the same direction. Men of plain common sense can be held to a mystical interpretation of any writing, in their vernacular tongue, only by the force of external constraint. There are two general modes of interpreting written language. One is to let it speak to plain common sense for itself. The other is to pinch it by the nose, with our expounding forceps, until it squeals, and then interpret the squeal. The Mormons loudly profess to adhere only to the former, but, like some others who handle the word of God deceitfully, they in reality practise both modes, as occasion requires. Their pretensions, however, to the former mode give them great power over the ignorant; and especially where a mystical or restricted interpretation of scripture has prevailed, they can produce a strong reaction in their own favor.

For example: by admitting the plain language of scripture, as regards the emotions of the Deity, the Mormons have gained a great advantage over many of their opponents. The Scriptures speak most explicitly and unequivocally of the joy, grief, wrath, &c., of the Deity. Still, many have assumed that this could not, in truth, be so; and in explaining these passages, they have, in fact, flatly contradicted them, and covered their temerity with a tissue of sophistry, more or less plausible and impervious. God thus becomes, in their hands, a great abstraction, a sort of intellectual iceberg, hanging over the universe with impending weight, frigidity, and terror, without pleasure, without pain, without feeling or emotion, in short, without any thing that anybody would think of loving, much less of worshipping.

To plain common sense people, the Mormon divinity, with hands, feet, and every other bodily organ, seems, as in fact it is, at once more rational and scriptural than such a monstrous abstraction, hung up, mid air, between atheism and pantheism.

The Mormons do not fail to avail themselves of this absurdity, wherever they can. They dethrone this abstraction, and set up an ape, plagued by the devil, and equalled (or, as it would seem, is about to be) by themselves.

In discussion, also, they have an immense advantage, arising from the fact that they come to the contest unencumbered, either by any well-known creeds or modes of interpretation. Their antagonist, like Bunyan's pilgrim at the gateway, always brings along a backload of opinions and formulas, which he bears and defends, in honor of his sect; and it often causes him more trouble to defend the language of his creed, than it does to maintain the truth of his opinions. The points of attack, on the one side, are always obvious, if not vulnerable; those on the other are vague and uncertain; and if not easily defended, are at least easily abandoned. A Mormon, in debate with a sectarian, is like the Irishman's flea: he can feel his bite, but when he puts his finger where he is, he is not there. It seems, sometimes, as though the devil gave cunning to those to whom the Lord had denied talent. They are at least vexatious and troublesome opponents. The buzz of a moscheto is often more annoying than the tramp of an elephant.

Indeed, nothing could be better adapted to delude the weak and credulous than their modes of interpretation and debate. They affect to be perfect masters of the most incomprehensible parts of the divine word. Where knowledge is perplexed, and genius falters, they at once soar aloft. No mysteries, nor contradictions, nor absurdities afford any obstacle to their ascent. Their dexterity increases, and their vanity rises, with the pile of nonsense which they accumulate. A part of their hearers are of course convinced, the rest are sure to be confounded; not as they imagine, however, with argument, but with *sound*.

This facility of apparent argument and exposition suits and attracts a great variety of characters. The annoyed, the rejected, and the outcasts from other churches, at once see new light and conceive new hopes. The ambitious and the vain admire the ease with which they can turn from the guidance of the wheelbarrow to the government of the church. The gross see charms in a sensual paradise, which they can see in no other.

The religious dreamer may here dream at his leisure, and fasten all his conceptions to objects of sense, which renders them at once more vigorous and stable.

All are convinced that they are born to be great; and Mormonism with its missions, orders, and functionaries, prophets, priests, apostles, &c., alone opens the door of destiny to their hopes. Other unaspiring multitudes have been trained to receive mere human opinions in faith, from their infancy. The dogmas of their sect constitute the whole object of their faith. They never have dared to question their truth. It is easy for these to transfer their allegiance from one Joe Smith to another. All that is needed is to stimulate their courage by the united force of novelty, sympathy, and numbers.

Other multitudes still have but one article in their creed, and that is a firm belief in the latest absurdity. That absurdity at the present moment happens to be Mormonism.

It sometimes happens that in warring upon the vices of mankind, men unconsciously attempt to annihilate their humanity, in place of reforming it. They see the mass of men living as if earth was their home, and the body their all. They rush to the opposite extreme, and strive to become ethereal, while still embodied in flesh. This they do by attempting to live as though they were already out of the body, and away from the "ills which flesh is heir to." They would fain live out of the world, instead of above it. They forget, that while we *should* not be devils we *cannot* be angels; that it is our business to reform, and not to affect to annihilate our humanity. Encompassed still by earthly care, enfeebled by vice, and perplexed with doubts, we ought to expect only what God demands, and demand only what he is ready to give. But such warfare upon human nature itself cannot fail to throw the community into two opposite classes, a large band of practical atheists, a small one of hypochrondiacal enthusiasts, ready for a new faith as soon as their old one has failed to work their fancied transmutation from an animal to a spiritual existence. Many of these try first to be all religion; next they try all sorts of religion; and finally no religion at all.

We may cherish either indignation, or pity, or contempt, for all these frailties of our common humanity, as we please. But we cannot remove them. We may lament or despise the ruin which grows out of them, but we cannot hinder it. By substituting *reason* and *faith* for *credulity* and *belief without reason*, we may arrest at once the fatal career of the skeptic and the fanatic, and give to the world a specific for half its crimes, and a solace for all its woes. This is our great work.

Reader, have you proved all things from God's most holy truth, and do you hold fast *only* what is good?

The pretensions which the Mormons make to the gifts of healing, remain to be noticed as one of the sources of popular credulity. As this is a standing source of delusion, and as events probably do actually occur among them, which, from ignorance of well-known facts, puzzle many honest minds, we will, as heretofore, first resort to the remedy of facts.

Plutarch relates that Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, cured affections of the spleen by pressing the side of the patient with his right foot. The emperor Hadrian is said to have restored a blind man to sight, in Pannonia. The emperor Vespasian also, as Tacitus relates, restored one man who was diseased in his eyes, and another who was lame in his hand, in Alexandria.*

Edward Third, as well as other princes of royal blood, cured many scrofulous tumors by the healing power of the king's touch, called from this popular superstition, "the king's evil," to this day. He had also a mystic ring, with which he cured epilepsy in the same way.

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* Tacitus, B. 4, p. 81.

Charles Second alone touched 92,000 persons, in twenty-four years, for the king's evil. The princes of Austria were accustomed to cure the same disease by giving a glass of wine to the patient with their own hand.

Doctor Raniere Gerbi, professor of mathematics in Pisa, Italy, in the year 1797, published his celebrated remedy for the toothache. A dozen bugs, of a peculiar species, were to be taken successively and squeezed between the thumb and finger, until their moisture had evaporated; the fingers of the operator thus becoming impregnated with the healing virtue, would cure the toothache for a year after, whenever applied to the face of the patient. This remedy soon became so famous that the healing bugs began to grow scarce. But after proper inquiry and experiment, it was found that *similar* bugs, of a different species, would do just as well; and soon after, it was found that no bug at all was just as good, provided the patient *imagined* that the fingers were duly impregnated. Here of course the spell soon broke, and, as in the case of Perkins' metallic tractors, the remedy lost its power, and Doctor Gerbi his fame.*

In France, the hand of glory, or the hand of a man who had been hung, taken off and dried, effected marvellous cures.

In 1662, Valentine Greatrakes, the pious son of an Irish gentlemen, got the impression, that he was commanded of God to touch for the king's evil. He commenced and practised with wonderful success for three years. At this time the ague prevailed, as an epidemic. He tried his power upon this also with equal success. At length the simple touch of his hand was found to cure, not only scrofula and ague, but epilepsy, paralysis, &c. Multitudes, not only from Ireland but from England, thronged around him, affected with all sorts of diseases; and so great was his fame, that he devoted whole days, for twelve hours per day, in laying hands on the sick. His glove was found to be equally as efficient as his hand, and even the sight of him sometimes produced wonderful effects. But though many were cured, *still more were not cured.*

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* Dic. des Sciences Medicales, vol. 29—An. Magnetism.

About the same time, Francis Bagnone, an Italian friar, was famous for the same gift of healing. Multitudes followed him wherever he went, and even the Prince of Parma, who had labored under a febrile disease for six months, was cured by his voice alone. Great numbers, however, who applied, were not benefited. One Marcus Avianus, of Denmark, and a farmer of Devonshire, England, the ninth son of a ninth son, are both said to have had this wondrous power of healing.

During the siege of Breda, in 1625, the soldiers were terribly afflicted with the scurvy. When the Prince of Orange learned that such were the ravages of the disease that the city was about to be delivered up, he sent three small vials of medicine for the relief of the whole army, assuring them "that the remedy was infallible, that it was of immense cost, and of still greater efficacy." And, although the whole three vials were not a dose for as many men, it was publicly given out with great solemnity that three or four drops were sufficient to impart healing virtue to a gallon of liquor. Nauseous roots, camphor, wormwood, &c., were secretly infused, which should give the liquor the necessary pungent flavor; and when their vials were exhausted, the nauseous decoction was still just as good and efficacious. The soldiers were taken by stratagem; every dose made them better, their limbs grew more and more limber, their hopes revived, their activity increased, they were restored, and their city saved.*

In the year 1798, an American, by the name of Perkins, obtained royal letters patent, in England, for the discovery of his famous *metallic tractors*, as he called them, or two small bits of metal, brought to a point, which he moved about over the diseased parts of the human body, gently touching the surface; and thus, by withdrawing the galvanic or electric fluid, (as he termed it,) he was enabled to cure the most inveterate chronic and other diseases.

This imposition prevailed in this country and Europe. Thousands and tens of thousands certified to the beneficial results of the tractors, and in less than six years, Mr. Perkins left England with ten thousand pounds sterling, as the avails of his practice upon popular credulity.

This silent and spiritual remedy seemed particularly acceptable to the Quakers. They founded a "Perkinian" institution for the cure of the poor, without the trouble and bustle of a medicinal hospital, and the useless aid of scientific doctors. They published a pamphlet disclosing the surprising success of their quiet and Quaker-like remedy.

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* See Rees' Encyclopedia, vol. 19—Imitation.

It was, however, soon discovered by Drs. Heygarth and Falconer, of England, that wooden tractors, painted in imitation of the metallic, would do just as well, and finally, that none at all were better than either, provided the patient could be made *to believe* that he was under their influence. Thus the bubble burst, and in less than a dozen years the wonderful tractors were wholly forgotten, though beyond doubt they cured multitudes of their diseases, through mere force of the imagination, so long as they believed in them.

In the year 1808, a Mr. Austin, in the town of Colchester, Vermont, gave out that he was gifted with the art of healing, and that whoever would describe to him, by word of mouth, or by letter, the symptoms of his malady, should receive "a *healing word*," if indeed his disease were curable. His obscure retreat was soon thronged by invalids from all sections of the country. Ballston and Saratoga seemed, for the time, forgotten. Barrooms and postoffices were deluged with floods of letters to the "prophet at Colchester." Mail carriers groaned under burdens of the kind of diseases described. Hawkers and vagrants traversed the country to procure and carry letters of symptoms to the prophet, for only fifty cents a letter. The deaf soon heard, the blind saw, dropsies and consumptions stood aghast, and multitudes were found to amend at the precise time their letters were supposed to have reached the prophet. Such fame was however too glorious for long continuance. Like that of the metallic tractors, it soon began to decline and leave the prophet to his leisure, and the diseases of his patients to their usual quiet and fatality.*

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* Powers' Influence of Imagination, p. 28.

Now here are instances of healing powers being possessed by individuals, to a far greater extent than the most credulous of the Mormons ever claimed for themselves or their leaders, and still in most cases there is no pretension to Divine aid ; and where or whenever there is any such pretension, it is false and sacrilegious.

Abating as much as we please from these reports, on the ground of credulity, there were still, in many cases, surprising cures wrought. The effects of magic, incantation, amulets, holy relics, &c. of ancient times, of many patent nostrums of more recent date, are all to be referred to the same causes. They have doubtless, one and all, in their day, wrought wonderful cures on all those diseases which could be cured by the combined effect of credulity and imagination ; exciting and working, through the mind, upon the body. Indeed there are probably some diseases which may thus be cured by the intervention of the mind, which could not be cured in any other way.

Undoubtedly all the cures above mentioned, and thousands of others, said to have been wrought by similar means, in the dark ages, are either the hyperbolical exaggerations of interested deceivers and dupes, or else real cures were wrought by the effect of the imagination alone, by well-known influences and laws.

In the case of all diseases which can be removed thus through the influence of the imagination, but one single thing is requisite in the remedy applied, and that is, that it should inspire the patient with full confidence in its virtues and success. The patient must believe in its efficacy. This point being gained, Perkins' metallic pegs, Dr. Heygarth's wooden ones, King Pyrrhus' foot, or Prince Edward's hand, Greatrakes' glove, the

Prophet Austin's word, the Prince of Orange's slops, Deacon Paris' spirit, or a dead saint's toe nail, Doctor Gerbis' bugs, and Joe Smith's holy oil, are all equally good. One will cure just as well as the other. The Mormon doctrine of faith is here therefore rightly insisted upon with great earnestness, viz: "First believe, and then you shall have the evidence."

The difference between all these and the miracles of our Saviour lies mainly in four points.

1. They all proceed from known, though to some extent inexplicable, causes and principles.

2. They were all merely tentative; that is, out of multitudes of cases, comparatively few cases succeeded, and in no instance was the success universal, as in the case of our Saviour.

3. The cures, in most cases, were either gradual, or else the diseases cured depended immediately upon the excitement of the nervous system, through the imagination, for their cure.

4. We have shown, in chapter third, that the credibility of the miracles of the New Testament depended, not solely upon testimony, nor upon the bare fact that wonderful events actually occurred, but upon the fact that those events are connected with a most *exalted character*, and with an entire series of moral, providential, and prophetic events, running through the entire history of the world, and presenting phenomena to every age, absolutely inexplicable without admitting the intervention of miraculous power. Indeed, nothing could be more silly than to compare these, or other strange events, with the miracles of our Saviour and his apostles.

There is nothing about them that has even the appearance of a well-authenticated miracle, and still they surpass, not only all that the Mormons have claimed for their apostolic faith, holy oil, and holy hands, but all they have ever imagined.

No Christian man will deny that prayer is needful for the sick. On the contrary, no human aid whatever can restore them without the divine blessing. But neither Smith's prayer, nor that of his followers, can be of any use, so long as they sacrilegiously pretend to the miraculous gifts of the Saviour and apostles of old.

Yet these vile pretensions have been one cause of the spread of Mormonism, which, all will see, could not have occurred had the credulity of the people been removed by a proper knowledge of facts. A few facts are sufficient to annihilate at once the wonder and the faith of such pretensions.

Another cause of the success of the Mormons is, that their system has been deemed too contemptible to deserve even a serious notice, much less a labored refutation. This would indeed be so, were it not for the fact that nothing is too absurd to be believed by multitudes. Most religious men have acted upon the principle that, to notice them, would only increase their notoriety and success. So far as direct public discussion with the Mormons is concerned, this is probably true; but can nothing be done to save the ignorant from their delusions? We have already neglected them too long. Like noxious weeds, when once rooted, if *they* do not live, their *seed* will; and our negligence has probably furnished us with a permanent and troublesome element in the republic for years to come.

The cunning policy of the Mormon leaders has also contributed greatly to their success. About one in ten

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have been commissioned as apostles, teachers, elders, &c. They usually select, for their missions abroad, their most devout men, who have recently been proselyted from other churches, and who know, in reality, as much about Mormonism as they do about the doctrines of Confucius, and no more. These are kept on the tramp, in quest of game. They preach the doctrines they held in other churches, slightly modified by some of their new notions about literal interpretation, prophecy, &c., and call it Mormonism. Two objects are thus accomplished at once. These most devotedly pious men are sent forth to operate on the religious sympathies of those churches which they have left, and from whom they in reality, as yet, still differ but little.

Again, they are kept out of sight of head-quarters, where they would be in imminent danger of learning too much of Mormonism, and consequently of apostatizing from the faith, as multitudes have done, after a seven years' tramp at preaching, so soon as they had time to take breath, under the wing of the prophet, and find out what Mormonism really is, as held by Smith, and taught and practised at Nauvoo.

Their absurd persecutions, in Missouri, have also tended, beyond measure, to give them credit and sympathy throughout the world. It seems, indeed, like the devil's own plan, not to destroy them, but to save them from a ruin and contempt which otherwise seemed inevitable. It is hoped that others will take lessons from this advantage, and give it to them no more. Justice and expediency both demand a more Christian, a wiser course.

The advantages which the Mormons have derived from the existence and use of sectarian creeds and formulas, have already been adverted to. Indeed, many think that, as Mohammedanism was the scourge of God wielded against ancient Popery, so Mormonism has been permitted to arise in modern times, to scourge belligerent sects, and pour contempt upon modern as well as ancient dogmatism. But time alone can develop those councils of the eternal Mind, which human sagacity cannot comprehend, much less predict.

There is, however, one consolation that arises from the contemplation of the errors and absurdities of all ages and all climes. In the great process of raising humanity from earth to heaven, each new experiment at falsehood leaves one less to be tried; and, since human nature seems obstinately bent upon learning evil only from actual experience, it is grateful to know that the fire which scorches one generation serves to illumine the next.

How many, or what cycles of folly are still to be run, before mankind will be content, in the simplicity of faith and the perfection of reason, to take the DIVINE SERMON ON THE MOUNT as containing the fundamental truths of all faith, the *great constitution of Christianity*, and sole chart of human salvation, as the Saviour of the world himself solemnly declared it to be, is known only to him who in mercy unfolded this divine chart to human view, and whose province alone it is to bring "good out of evil, light out of darkness, and order out of confusion."

Let all our hearts ascend in fervent prayer to him, that CREDULITY and trust in man may cease, and that true faith IN HIM ALONE may increase, until the promised hour of peace and rest to wearied, phrensied man shall come.

A WORD

TO

JOSEPH SMITH, JUNIOR,

AT NAUVOO, ILLINOIS.

SIR,—

IT is my right, it is the right of every American citizen, of every Christian, of every honest man, to arraign and resent the perfidy of your career. Others have chosen to indicate their contempt both of your character and conduct, by silent neglect. I have preferred to address you personally; not with the desire of inflating your vanity, nor in expectation of contributing to your reform. The former is needless; the latter, I fear, hopeless. No, sir; were none but yourself concerned, you might well be left to putrefy, amid the moral pestilence which you have produced. But the misguided dupes of the conjoint machinations of yourself and your comrades, in mercy, demand the pity of mankind. I submit to the ungrateful task of addressing you, only in hope that thus I may the better convey some benefit to them.

I have charitably and industriously sought from your writings, and your history, to find some rational ground for believing that you and your comrades were only a new species of religious maniacs. I have sought in vain. A man, however kindly disposed to think well of you, after a thorough examination of your career, might as well attempt to believe your religion as to regard you in any other light than that of a deliberate, coldblooded, persevering deceiver. I do not pretend that, in the outset, you even anticipated the final result. On the contrary, there is abundant evidence that, at first, your aims rose no higher than those of ordinary vagrants and jugglers. You have not even the poor merit of either talent or originality. Your highest aim has ever been to crawl among the droves of reptile impostors who have preceded you; and, though your ignorance and your utter incapacity have not suffered you to turn aside from their loathsome track, your fortunate union with others of greater ability, who have entered into your secrets, and the lamentable credulity of the times, have enabled you to attain a more signal and desolating success than most of your predecessors.

You complain that others have called you an impostor and a knave. By reading the preceding pages, you will perceive that your recorded history proves you such. You complain, also, of the severity of those whom you have never injured. You mistake. There is not a man on the globe whom you have not injured. Others may have either injured or insulted individuals or nations, but you have at once outraged and disgraced human nature itself. Your creed informs us, that there are those for whom we should not even pray. Are you not, yourself, one of that wretched number? You charge your early associates and witnesses to your book with the most abominable crimes, murder not excepted. Who led them to the commission of those crimes? Who was their first instigator? Who first corrupted and deceived them, with pretended revelations from God? If others doubt, you cannot. Others have been guilty of theft, robbery, arson, murder, &c. We are able to convict and condemn them. Your turpitude differs from theirs, in the fact, that shielding yourself behind the pretended favor of the Deity, you are enabled, as all impostors before you have been, with singular safety and facility, to commit all crimes by a single act.

If you are, or ever have been, persecuted for your opinions, as you absurdly complain, so are they. If you have a right to rob by imposture unmolested, they have a right to do the same by force. If it is persecution to arraign them, it is persecution to do the same to you.

It is not your *peculiar opinions*, as you well know, but your *impious pretensions*, which honest and Christian men reject, with loathing and abhorrence. On the contrary, many doubt whether you really have any religious opinions at all. They doubt whether you even believe in the existence of a Supreme Being.

You and your associates are fond of smooth talk, and of what you call, and what, in fact, in other cases, would be kind and gentlemanly discussion. Such kind of language, experience proves, can neither benefit you nor your followers. It only inflates your vanity, and encourages you in your career of infamy. You can have no such language from me. You need the language of *justice*, of rebuke, and not of compassion; and even those who pity you most, and would labor most for your reform, should at present hold toward you no other language than that which adequately presents both your turpitude and your crimes, if, indeed, language is adequate to the task.

But many of your followers are a pious, honest, industrious, and well-meaning, though awfully deluded people. It is for them I feel compassion. To treat you with even ordinary respect, is to treat them with the most wanton and unfeeling cruelty. They have, with a noble and generous enthusiasm, worthy, indeed, of a better cause, sacrificed, or rather prostituted, their all to you. Abandoning home, faith, country, and friends, they have encountered hardship, famine, pestilence, and death. Their blood has flowed like water; their wives and children have been abused, beaten, massacred, exiled, frozen, and starved, by lawless men, on your account.

You told them it was the cause of God. You knew it was not. While you and your comrades are still fattening in indolence, on the spoils of these outrages, and adding still to their number, do you dare to claim from me, or any other man who knows the facts, the honeyed words of Christian love, or the polished speech of even ordinary civility and kindness? You will not have it. "Wo unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites!" I doubt not would be the language of the divine and compassionate Saviour of men himself, were he upon earth to address you in your present condition and character.

Think of your hypocrisy, your turpitude, and, if possible, repent and turn from the ruin within and around you. Your followers, many of them, may be deceived. They doubtless are. You are not. You know better. If, then, you care not for your own salvation, care, at least, for the good of those thousands who have so generously, and still so stupidly, perilled their all for you. Could it be believed that you are still within the reach of heaven's grace, good men might be invited to pray for that grace on your behalf. That it may at least reach, and illuminate, and save your deluded followers, is doubtless the sincere prayer of every Christian heart, awake to the ruin which you have accomplished upon them.

To such a desire you may attribute this letter, and the pages which precede it. That it may, with the blessing of God, reclaim some from their adherence to Mormonism, and prevent others from rushing into its senseless and debasing absurdities, is the earnest prayer of the AUTHOR.

THE END.

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